

**The Partisan Secret:
Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Partisanship**

by

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To my mother

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the theoretical link between institutional setting for policy making and partisanship both in the electorate and the legislature in a consistent framework. I confirm this relationship by analyzing both observational data and experimental data in the three following papers.

The first paper, “Partisans in Institutional Context: Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Mass Partisanship,” examines how political institutions constrain political parties, and thus influence mass partisanship, by connecting behavioral theories on partisanship with gridlock models of political institutions. I theorize that as the institutional constraints on policy change (measured by the number of “veto players” or “gridlock intervals”) increase, the political party in power is less likely to matter in determining policy outcomes, and therefore individuals are less likely to become partisans. I confirm this relationship by analyzing American National Election Studies (ANES) data from 1952 to 2008 and Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data that covers 114 election surveys across 49 countries.

The second paper, “Change Partisans Can Believe In: Policy Change, Cues, and Partisan Beliefs,” scrutinizes the premise that citizens can infer policy implications from the institutional context, the crucial assumption that underlies my argument in the first paper and a growing literature that connects institutional context and mass behavior. Using a survey experiment, I provide evidence that citizens infer policy implications from the

institutional context, using “institutional cues” and “elite cues.” Moreover, I demonstrate that this expectation of policy change strengthens their partisan beliefs.

The third paper, “The Partisan Secret: Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Party Unity,” argues that the institutional context shapes the partisan bond among legislators. Viewing party unity as a broad concept that encompasses party members’ decisions to vote together and their decisions to belong together, I theorize that institutional constraints on policy change significantly reduce political parties’ abilities and incentives to foster party unity. Drawing upon novel measures from the *Varieties of Democracy* (V-Dem) dataset, I find evidence to support this relationship, based on 129 countries, with time series extending from 1980 to 2000.

Taken together, this research enhances our understanding of the institutional underpinnings of partisanship both in the electorate and in the legislature.

Chapter I

Introduction

While many renowned political scientists point out (e.g., Bryce 1921, 119; Schattschneider 1942; Schumpeter 1942, 269) the indispensable role of political parties in modern democracy, recent studies document mixed evidence as to whether political parties perform the traditional and theoretical functions scholars have envisioned. According to contemporary scholarship, a political party forms as a solution to internal and external problems of collective action inherent in the legislative process (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005). Without durable coalitions, legislators face chaotic and unpredictable outcomes in policy making. A political party also improves the electoral prospects of party members by providing a brand name (or reputation) along with resources for mobilizing citizens. Voters base their loyalty to a party on this brand. Within the legislature, parties provide collective benefits for legislators who face tough choices among votes, seats, and policies (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Fenno 1973; Saalfeld and Strøm 2014, 372; Strøm 1990).

Party loyalty is not preordained, however. Legislators can and do dissent from the party line. They can speak out publicly against the party, vote against it, and – at the limit – quit the party. Accordingly, a political party’s abilities and incentives to foster party unity

have been a central concern to in the literature on legislative behavior and political parties, and a growing number of scholars seek to understand variation in party unity in a comparative perspective. On the other hand, while partisanship has been understood as the single most important factor that shapes citizens' political beliefs and actions, findings of substantial variability in the level of mass partisanship over time and across space have invited competing explanations. In this dissertation, I explore the conditions under which political parties become the dominant influence on political behavior – both in the legislature and in the electorate.

Studies on legislative partisanship and those on mass partisanship have been commonly considered as two separate fields of research with little communication. Accordingly, existing literature has not offered a theoretical framework that cuts across both. In this dissertation, I consider both legislators and citizens' partisan behavior their actions and responses to incentives and constraints determined by their institutional surroundings. In particular, I focus on the theoretical implications of institutional constraints for policy change, and connect both the literature on party unity and that on mass partisanship to a consistent analytical framework of comparative political institutions.

Recent advancements in institutional theories have paid particular attention to institutional configurations that determine the extent of policy change or gridlock (Binder 1999; Brady and Volden 1998; Cox and McCubbins 2001; Krehbiel 1996, 1998; Mayhew 1991; Tsebelis 1995; 2002). Despite the differences in the precise specifications of theoretical models and empirical tests, there is a growing theoretical consensus that explains policy stability as a function of the array of preferences of key institutional actors, known as veto players or pivotal voters, and the location of the status quo

Drawing upon this theoretical framework on political institutions, I contend that institutional constraints on policy change (measured by the number of “veto players” or “gridlock intervals”) significantly reduce political parties’ capacities and incentives to foster party unity, as well as citizens’ incentives and motivations to form partisan attachment. I demonstrate that the institutional dynamic of party loyalty in the legislature follows the exactly same pattern as that found in the electorate. This framework also enables us to systematically analyze both spatial and temporal variation in the patterns of partisanship. I confirm this systematic relationship, utilizing a mixed-methods approach combining cross-national observational data analysis and novel experimental designs.

1.1 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized into three empirical papers (chapters), each of which can be read in isolation. In Chapter 2, I examine how political institutions constrain political parties, and thus influence mass partisanship, by connecting behavioral theories on partisanship with gridlock models of political institutions. Existing approaches have not provided a theoretical framework that cuts across different political contexts. The analytical usefulness of the concept of partisanship in European context is still a matter of dispute, and scholars find it difficult to apply this core concept in new democracies despite the prevalence of arguments that mass partisanship contributes to the development of a stable party system and enhances prospects of democratic consolidation. On the other hand, despite the recent advance in comparative institutional analysis, its significant theoretical implications for mass attitudes and behavior have rarely been investigated. I theorize that as the institutional constraints on policy change increase, the party differential, or

comparative benefit of having a party in office decreases, and therefore individuals are less likely to become partisans.

I find evidence to support this relationship, by analyzing American National Election Study (ANES) data from 1952 to 2008 using advanced multilevel models, and test the generalizability of these findings using Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data that covers 114 election surveys across 49 countries. My approach enables us to explain the patterns of mass partisanship over time in the United States and across diverse democracies in a consistent way, regardless of the level of their institutional complexity, providing the broadest empirical examination yet conducted on this question. In contrast to existing theoretical predictions, my account suggests that party polarization may not always lead to the rise of mass partisanship, as in the United States; rather it can lead to the decline in mass partisanship as a result of its interplay with institutional configurations and subsequent policy gridlock.

In Chapter 3, I scrutinize the premise that citizens can infer policy implications from the given institutional context, the crucial assumption that underlies my findings in Chapter 1 and a growing literature that connects institutional context and mass behavior. In particular, I explore whether citizens can understand potential policy change from the given institutional context, as well as the behavioral consequence of this policy expectation. In this chapter, I view citizens as “cognitive misers” who attempt to make efficient decisions under circumstances of limited information, limited ability to process information, and limited incentives to become politically engaged. Citizens achieve this low-information rationality through the use of information shortcuts or heuristics. In particular, this chapter examine how two distinct types of cues available in institutional

context – what I call ‘institutional cues’ and ‘elite cues’ respectively – enable citizens to shape their understanding of potential policy change, and how such perceptions affect partisan beliefs. In particular, I present a survey experiment that isolates the effects of both of these cues based on a large sample of U.S. adults whose demographics closely resemble the U.S. adult population. My experimental design permits direct evaluation of the relative impact of two cues, their interactive effect on policy expectation, and subsequent consequences for partisan beliefs.

I find that citizens shape their policy expectations in the given institutional context by relying on both easily observable institutional attributes and political elites’ opinion as heuristic tools, challenging the long-standing yet dim view of citizen competence in the context of complex policy making processes. While easily accessible and direct elite opinions play a large role in forming citizens’ perceptions, a relatively indirect cue that requires moderate informational processing shows a consistent effect as well. I also find that citizens use both cues effectively, rather than attending to the most effective cues while ignoring others. Finally, the findings show that public expectations of policy change strengthen partisan beliefs, suggesting micro-level foundations to link macro-level institutional arrangements and partisan behavior, one of the most studied forms of political behavior. Together, my findings not only advance our theoretical and empirical understanding of how citizens understand institutions and process but also illustrate why this research agenda merits further study. My study expands the scope of behavioral research that incorporates the role of institutional setting for policy making and provides the micro-foundation of a growing body of works that link political institutions and mass behavior.

In Chapter 4, I argue that institutional context shapes the partisan bond among legislators. Viewing party unity as a broad concept that encompasses party members' decisions to vote together and their decisions to belong together, I explain party unity as the result of legislators' actions and response to incentives and constraints determined by their institutional environment. Connecting the contemporary understanding of political parties to the analytical framework of comparative political institutions, I demonstrate how institutional conditions for policy making affect political parties' abilities and incentives to foster unity. In particular, I argue that the institutional arrangements allowing for a greater extent of policy change should increase party unity and magnify the impact of candidate selection – one of party leaders' key disciplinary tools – on party unity. I confirm my hypotheses, utilizing novel measures of party unity from the most recent Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset. I analyze the largest time-series cross-sectional dataset on party unity to date, and I find that institutional constraints on policy change are a significant and substantively important factor to account for legislators' party voting and party switching. As institutional arrangements do not allow significant policy changes, party members are more likely to voice their dissent and exit as well. Also, I find that the positive impact of centralized candidate selection on party unity is conditioned by the institutional arrangements that structure policy making. This resolves some of the conflicting claims regarding the determinants of party unity. Also, my findings confirm previous arguments that emphasize the way policy making is organized by institutional context but that have rarely been tested with large-scale quantitative data (Cox 1987; Cheibub 2007; Figueiredo and Lomongi 2000). The new dataset affords a greater leverage in estimating and disentangling the effects of different institutional factors. Taken together, this research

presented here enhances our understanding of the institutional underpinnings of partisanship both in the electorate and in the legislature.

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Chapter II

Partisans in Institutional Context:

Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Mass Partisanship

Abstract

This article examines the link between citizens' partisanship and the institutional context that constrains potential policy changes. Combining institutional and behavioral theories, I argue that as the institutional constraints on policy change increase, the political party in power is less likely to matter in determining policy outcomes, and therefore individuals are less likely to become partisans. I confirm this systematic relationship using multilevel analyses of the ANES data from 1964 to 2008 and the CSES data that covers 114 surveys across 49 countries. This approach enables us to explain the patterns of partisanship across diverse political contexts in a consistent way, regardless of the level of their institutional complexity. In contrast to existing studies, my results also suggest that party polarization can lead to the decline of mass partisanship as a result of its interplay with institutional configurations and subsequent policy gridlock.

2.1 Introduction

Since partisanship or party identification was first viewed as a fairly stable psychological attachment to a political party in the classic Michigan model, this concept has been at the core of our understanding of citizens' political perceptions, opinions, and actions (Bartels, 2002; Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, 1960; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2004). Partisanship serves as an organizing device for one's understanding of the complexities of politics¹ (Bartels 2002; Campbell et al., 1960; Downs, 1957; Zaller, 1992); it shapes citizens' issue positions (Johnston, Hagen, and Jamieson 2004; Markus and Converse 1979), vote choice (Bartels 2000), and even their core values (Goren 2005); and partisanship mobilizes individuals to participate in the process of electoral democracy (Abramson and Aldrich 1982; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Therefore, scholars concluded that partisanship is "the linchpin of our modern understanding of electoral democracy" (Weisberg and Greene 2003, 115), or "the most important development in modern electoral behavior research" (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, 20). Recently, evidence also shows that partisanship can play a significant role in many aspects of non-political domains, including residential preferences (Bishop 2009), scholarship allocations (Munro, Lasane, and Leary 2010; Iyengar and Westwood 2015), and mate selection (Alford et al. 2011; Kloststad, Casey A. McDermott and Hatemi 2012).

Despite the extensive body of literature, findings of substantial variability in the level of mass partisanship over time (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Wattenberg, 1985; see also Bartels 2000; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Mackuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1989) and

¹ Also, prior studies show that partisanship can affect one's perception of the economy whose relatively objective evidence is available (Duch, Harvey, and Anderson 2010; Evans and Andersen 2006; Gerber and Huber 2009).

across space (Berglund et al. 2006; Bengtsson et al. 2013; Holmberg 1994; Leduc 1981; Schmitt and Holmberg 1995; Thomassen 1979) have raised a question about the generalizability of the concept, leaving us a puzzle of how to explain these contextual variations. To untangle this puzzle, two major explanations have been proposed. A first explanation finds its answer from a broad transformative force that social and political modernization brings (Dalton 1984; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). According to Russell Dalton and his colleagues, modernization leads to a politically more sophisticated citizen who no longer needs the cost-saving device of partisanship in the realm of politics, and thus, their so-called dealingment hypothesis holds that partisan ties have been generally eroding especially in most advanced industrial societies. A second view is that it is the degree of ideological polarization that affects people's party loyalty. In particular, recent studies in the field of American politics attempt to establish a positive association between patterns of mass partisanship and unprecedented party polarization in the United States (Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013; Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2010; Nicholson 2012; see Lupu 2014 for comparative study). This alternative perspective states that people who perceive larger differences between parties tend to develop stronger partisanship.

In this paper, I pay attention to the important discrepancy between these theoretical predictions and empirical observations, and seek to address crucial questions that existing approaches have not fully resolved. Specifically, with respect to the first explanation, how can we explain notable variations still existing within advanced democracies? Can we develop a general theory to explain complex patterns in mass partisanship in a much broader context including new democracies? Concerning the second, how can we explain

stability in, or even decline of mass partisanship over time in the United States at the aggregate level despite the unprecedented polarization between the two major parties? What is the unexplored countervailing process that constrains the resurgence of partisanship and even leads to partisan decline?

To answer these unresolved questions, I focus on the importance of institutional contexts and their consequences for policy outcomes, to which existing scholarship on partisanship has paid relatively little attention. Combining institutional theories with behavioral ones, I argue that as the institutional constraints on policy change increase, the political party in power is less likely to matter in determining policy outcomes, and therefore individuals are less likely to become partisans. Recent advancements in institutional theories have paid particular attention to institutional configurations that determine the extent of policy change or gridlock (Binder 1999; Brady and Volden 1998; Cox and McCubbins 2001; Krehbiel 1996, 1998; Mayhew 1991; Tsebelis 1995; 2002), and scholars have actively applied this framework to various aspects of political life, ranging from legislative performance (Binder 1999; Howell et al. 2000; Krehbiel 1996, 1998; Tsebelis 1995) to macroeconomic policy outcomes (Bawn 1999; Franzese 2002; Hallerberg and von Hagen 1998), even to civil war duration (Cunningham 2006).

Nevertheless, this theoretical implication of institutional constraints on policy changes has rarely been incorporated into the study of public opinion and political behavior. According to existing micro-level behavioral theories on partisanship, however, this institutional consequence can have significant effects on the partisan's cognition and motivation as well as rational calculation of self-interest. As the institutional constraints on policy change decrease, the political party in power is more likely to matter in determining

policy outcomes, and therefore individuals are more likely to become partisans, by expecting to maximize their future utilities (Achen, 1992; Bullock, 2009; Fiorina 1981; Gerber and Green, 1998), by better distinguishing the parties and feeling greater attachment toward their party over the other(s) (Tajfel and Turner 1979, Green, Palmquist, and Schickel 2002), and by better justifying or rationalizing their motivated reasoning (Groenendyk 2009; Kunda 1990; Taber and Lodge 2006; Lodge and Taber 2000).

I test this hypothesis through multiple multilevel analyses of the American National Election Studies (ANES) data from 1964 to 2008, and further examine the generalizability of this finding using the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data that covers 114 election surveys across 49 countries, covering both temporal and spatial variation in the level of partisanship. Across different datasets and alternative measures, I find empirical evidence that the institutional arrangements that produce policy gridlock discourage partisanship in the mass public. My analysis offers the broadest empirical examination on this topic, suggesting an alternative and more general explanation that can cover diverse democracies including new democracies as well as the United States. This paper also connects the literature on political institutions and that on political behavior, two lines of research that have conventionally been studied separately in the field.² Moreover, it provides a new perspective to our understanding of the elite-mass relationship, and the longstanding debate on the relative impact of partisanship versus policy factors on political behavior. In particular, my account offers both the theoretical explanation and empirical

² For example, in the field of American politics, the literature on divided government and that on partisanship have respectively constituted the core of studies on political institutions and those on political behavior. This study shows how these two lines of studies can meet and how such theoretical connection can provide new insights to understand the consequences of current party polarization.

evidence that party polarization may not always lead to the rise of mass partisanship, as in the United States; rather it may lead to the decline in citizens' partisanship as a result of its interplay with institutional configurations, and subsequent policy gridlock.

The article proceeds as follows: the first section briefly reviews the existing explanations regarding contextual variation in mass partisanship; the second section connects recent achievements in institutional analysis at the macro-level and diverse micro-level behavioral theories on partisanship; in the third section, I present empirical evidence that is robust against different measures and model specifications, showing that institutional constraints significantly shapes individual's partisanship. I close with a discussion of implications for the existing literature and recent debate regarding this topic.

2.2 Explaining Contextual Variation in Mass Partisanship

In the traditional view, partisanship is characterized as similar to a social identity, formed early in life and resistant to change through life, constituting the core of individuals' political beliefs and actions (Campbell et al. 1960; Gerber et al. 2010). On the other hand, the alternative view conceptualizes partisanship as a "running tally" of retrospective evaluations from the rational choice perspective, and scholars have shown that partisanship is endogenous with issue positions and susceptible to movement (Fiorina 1981; Achen 1989, 1992; MacKuen et al. 1989; Franklin 1992; Franklin and Jackson 1983). While most of the previous debate on the notion of partisanship has been centered on its relative fixity, there is a growing consensus that partisanship is relatively stable, but by no means unchanging (as an overview, see Bartels 2010, 243; Johnston 2006, 332). Accordingly, the current scholarship focuses on various factors that explain notable variations in party ties,

and particularly, different patterns of partisanship across time and space.³ As pointed out in recent overviews of the literature (Bengtsson et al. 2013; Huber et al. 2005; Johnston 2006; Lupu 2014; Thomassen 2005), in contrast to voluminous studies that have been conducted to investigate the nature of partisanship in the United States, a systematic cross-national analysis to study the influence of context is still lacking.

While two important explanations have been proposed to resolve this puzzle, they produce a series of conflicting results in terms of both theoretical aspects and empirical evidence. According to Russell Dalton and his colleagues (Dalton 1984; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000), “party ties were generally eroding as a consequence of social and political modernization,” as the growing proportion of well-educated, politically-knowledgeable, and cognitively sophisticated voters would be less inclined to develop strong psychological attachment to specific parties, “and thus most advanced industrial societies should experience a dealignment trend” (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, 22). However, despite the overall trend of partisan decline, many scholars find compelling evidence that partisanship has developed in various patterns and in a more complex way than the so-called dealignment thesis would predict (Berglund et al. 2006; Bengtsson et al. 2013; Schmitt and Holmberg 1995). For example, Schmitt and Holmberg (1995) conclude that “specific developments, by country and party, are so varied that any general ‘overall’ view disguises more than it discloses” by analyzing fourteen West European countries and the United States. In particular, the United States is a very important exception to the

³ Some scholars suspect that much of the variation may be an artifact of measurement error. Many other studies, however, have documented that it cannot be simply attributed to the problem of methods or measurements (for an overview, see Bartels 2008; Johnston 2006; Niemi and Weisberg 2001).

dealignment pattern (e.g., Bartels 2000; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Hetherington 2001).

How can we explain complex variations still existing within advanced democracies?

Recent individual-level analyses also raise a question about the micro-level mechanism that generates the aggregate-level partisan dealignment. According to these studies, the relationship between political sophistication and partisan dealignment is rather opposite to Dalton and his colleagues' "dealignment hypothesis." That is, politically sophisticated voters are more, not less likely to be partisans (Albright 2009; Dassonneville, Hooghe, and Vanhoutte 2012; Dassonneville, Hooghe, and Vanhoutte 2014; Joslyn and Haider-Markel 2014; Arzheimer 2015).⁴

Lastly, the exclusion of new democracies in existing comparative studies is unfortunate for not only a theoretical but also normative reasons.⁵ The study on acquisition of party attachments in new democracies may be particularly important given the prevalence of arguments that mass partisanship contributes to the development of stable party system and enhances prospects of democratic consolidation (Brader and Tucker 2001; Converse and Dupeux 1962; Almond and Verba 1963; Converse 1969; Mainwaring 1999; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Dalton and Weldon 2007; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2004). Moreover, there remains the question of how we can develop a general theory to explain patterns of mass partisanship in a much broader context including new democracies.

An alternative explanation emphasizes a shorter-term political context such as the extent of ideological polarization between major political parties, rather than long-term

⁴ Related to this point, Jessee (2009) presents notable evidence that even highly informed partisans show significant biases by the spatial standard while partisans tend to converge toward the behavior of independents as information levels increase.

⁵ In Dalton's (2000) analysis, even Greece, Spain, and Portugal are excluded on the grounds that they have relatively new democratic systems and their socio-economic development trails the advanced industrial democracies.

social changes (Berglund et al. 2006; Schmitt and Holmberg 1995; Schmitt 2009; Holmberg 1994). In particular, scholars in the field of American politics make a theoretical connection between recent attention to party polarization and patterns of mass partisanship (Hetherington 2001; Abramowitz and Saunders 2006; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013; Levendusky 2009; Levendusky 2010; Lupu 2014; Nicholson 2012). Despite the differences in precise processes they emphasize and their methods to test the hypotheses, these studies have made the same prediction: the highest level of polarization between the two parties would generate the “resurgence” of mass partisanship – rather than its decline – in the United States. Hetherington (2001) states, “more partisan elite behavior caused by polarization should clarify party positions for the public, which in turn should influence the importance and salience of parties.” Lupu (2014) also confirms Hetherington’s (2001) argument by testing the impact of party polarization on mass partisanship based on a broad set of data. Recent experimental studies show that party polarization is likely to increase partisan behaviors either by providing clearer signals (Levendusky 2010), by activating group bias (Nicholson 2012), or by stimulating motivated reasoning (Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013). While this claim is very intuitive and self-explanatory, it indeed needs reconciliation with the empirical observation that mass partisanship at the aggregate level has been fairly stable, if not in decline, over time in the United States despite the unprecedented polarization between the two major parties.⁶ How can we explain this important discrepancy between the prior theoretical prediction and empirical observation? What is the unexplored countervailing process that constrains the resurgence of partisanship and can even lead to a decline of mass

⁶ Refer to Figure 2.1 for the overall trend of partisanship over time in the United States.

partisanship? I seek to address these remaining questions by focusing on the important role of political institutions in constraining potential policy change, which has a significant influence on the micro-level process in which partisans shape their loyalty to their parties.

2.3 Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Mass Partisanship

I propose an institutional explanation by integrating behavioral theories at the micro level and institutional theories at the macro level. For this purpose, I first pay attention to Anthony Downs's core concept, "expected party differential," which has been actively employed to explain individuals' political decision-making. Deriving from the comparison of the expected utilities an individual would receive if each party were in office (Downs 1957; Key 1966; Fiorina 1981), this utility concept has been central to the rational-choice perspective on partisanship (Achen 1992; Bullock 2009; Gerber and Green 1998). Gerber and Green (1998), for example, equate expected party differential with partisanship (see also Jackson and Kollman 2011). An individual is more likely to form loyalty to a political party that can provide a higher party differential.

According to Anthony Downs (1957, 39), however,

"A voter makes his decisions by comparing future performances he expects from the competing parties. But, if he is rational, he knows that no party will be able to do everything that it says it will do. Hence, he cannot merely compare platforms; instead he must estimate in his own mind what the parties would actually do were they in power."

This is where political institutions play a significant role (Fiorina 1992; Kedar 2005; Lacy and Paolino 1998).⁷ Well-established studies of both American politics and

⁷ Lacy and Paolino (1998, 1182) argue that voters choose between candidates based on the policy outcomes they expect from the candidates rather than on the policy platforms of the

comparative politics have made clear predictions about the extent of policy change as a function of the array of preferences of key institutional actors, known as veto players or pivotal voters, interacting with the rules of the game. That is, political institutions can significantly affect citizens' party differentials and, in turn, their partisanship by shaping the levels of potential policy changes. If the institutional constraints on policy change increase, the political party in power would be less likely to matter in determining policy outcomes, and therefore citizens are less likely to form loyalty to a certain political party.

Since David Mayhew's (1991) seminal study of divided government, many scholars in the field of American politics have examined the theoretical and empirical significance of political institutions in terms of their ability to change the policy of the status quo (Krehbiel 1998; Brady and Volden 1998; Binder 1999; Coleman 1999; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003). According to Krehbiel (1996; 1998), the extent of such policy change is constrained by constitutional and congressional rules, in particular, the presidential veto, the two-thirds requirement for veto overrides, and the three-fifths cloture requirement for overcoming senatorial filibusters. The floor median proposes legislation that must then avoid a filibuster and win the approval of either the veto pivots or the president. The policy status quo located between the preferences of veto players cannot be readily revised, and this prediction concerns the key concept known as the gridlock interval: the set of status quo policies on the ideological spectrum for which policy change is impossible. In the field of comparative politics, Tsebelis (1995; 2002) develops a veto-players theory that provides a simple but rigorous framework to analyze the diverse institutional structures across countries and over time. According to Tsebelis, a veto player

candidates, and that their expectations about the policy outputs of candidates depend on the partisan control of the separate branches of government in a separation of powers system.

is “an individual or collective actor whose agreement is required for a change in policy” and thus, significant departures from the status quo are impossible when veto players are many – that is, when the number of veto players or the ideological distance among them increases. In a similar vein, Cox and McCubbins (2001) also stress the importance of this notion, and define the “effective” number of vetoes in a system as a function of the number of institutional veto points and the diversity of preferences of the agents controlling those veto points, noting that “changing policy becomes increasingly costly as the number of parties to a negotiation [veto players], or as the diversity of their preferences, increases” (Cox and McCubbins 2001, 27).

Despite the differences in the precise specifications of theoretical models and empirical tests, these studies make clear predictions about policy stability as a function of the array of preferences of key institutional actors (veto players or pivotal voters) interacting with the structure of political institutions. Combining the micro-level theories on partisanship with institutional theories, I hypothesize that *citizens are more likely to become partisans in the institutional contexts which allow higher levels of policy changes.*

Partisans are commonly juxtaposed in contrast to policy-oriented voters in existing literature. The spatial models of voting assume that voters are motivated by policies, regardless of whether they seek to vote for the closest policy positions (Black 1948; Jessee 2009; Jessee 2010; Tomz and Van Houweling 2008; Davis, Hinich, and Ordeshook 1970) or to achieve the closest policy outcomes (Adams, Bishin, and Dow 2008; Adams, Merrill III, and Grofman 2005; Fiorina 1992; Grofman 1985; Kedar 2005; Lacy and Paolino 1998). The studies with a psychological perspective sharply disagree with the spatial models and emphasize the role of non-policy factors, including the most prominent one – partisanship

(Cohen 2003; Rahn 1993; Campbell et al. 1960). Accordingly, even until recently, many studies have centered on the debate regarding the relative influence of policy versus partisanship on voting behavior and public opinion (Adams, Merrill, and Grofman 2005; Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Bullock 2011; Cohen 2003; Jessee 2009, 2010; Kedar 2009).⁸ I contend that partisanship and policy are not substitutes, but rather that the policy dimension should be integrated to fully understand how partisans think and behave. By reconciling existing theory and evidence, I show that individuals are more likely to become partisans, as the institutional context in which they find themselves allows for larger degrees of policy change.

My institutional approach may be understood largely as a rational choice perspective in that citizens seek to maximize their future expected utilities, and thus their partisanship is assumed to be relatively susceptible to movement (even if within a limited range),⁹ but with important distinctions: it does not assume a priori that citizens necessarily rely on retrospective evaluations of past performance to derive the party differential – which is inherently the prospective evaluation of party performance. Nor do I assume that citizens necessarily involve mindful and systematic processing of the information regarding substantive policy outcomes or detailed institutional features, in contrast to the premise of Fiorina (1981) and most Bayesian models (Achen 1992; Gerber and Green 1998;

⁸ This is well represented by the contrasting titles of two recent studies, “Party over Policy: The Dominating Impact of Group Influence on Political Beliefs,” by Geoffrey Cohen (2003), and “Voting for Policy, Not Parties: How Voters Compensate for Power Sharing,” by Orit Kedar (2009).

⁹ Of course, no one would argue that partisanship is absolutely fixed or absolutely flexible. Nevertheless, in many traditional psychological studies, partisanship was thought to originate from one’s childhood socialization into politics, primarily via the family; changes in partisanship occurred mainly as a result of infrequent party realignments. Thus, for many years, partisanship was seen as an “unmoved mover” that could affect other political attitudes without being affected by political events (Johnston 2006; Niemi and Weisberg 2001, 322).

Bullock 2009). Rather, citizens can derive this estimate of comparative benefits from a wide range of potential heuristics and shortcuts either directly or indirectly from the given institutional context. Fiorina (1992), for example, argues that recent experience with divided control of government may give some voters both an incentive and a cue to assess political parties based on how the different branches' powers, in combination with candidates' positions, will produce policy outcomes. Lacy and Paolino (1998) find evidence that voters consider the power and issue positions of the executive and the legislature in his or her vote choice. Moreover, media coverage, or expert opinions on policy gridlock (or sweeping policy changes) can also help a citizen form his or her evaluation of the expected policy change and the party differential (Mondak 1994; Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey 1987; Iyengar and Kinder 1987). Combining this literature, Hahm (2015) shows that the public can infer policy implications of institutional attributes such as divided government by using both "institutional cues" and "elite cues," and tests their relative impact on citizens' perceptions of policy change.¹⁰

Although this notion of party differential has been primarily discussed against the social-psychological studies, it is not theoretically incompatible with alternative conceptualizations of partisanship. Drawing upon social identity theory developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), Green and his colleagues (2002) argue that the "traditional" view of partisanship has not been fully articulated, and explicitly conceptualize partisanship as a form of social group identification. They claim that partisan identification functions in much the same way as does an individual's identification with religious denominations.

¹⁰ See also Vowles (2010) and Fortunato and Stevenson (2013) for the cross-national evidence that citizens can infer the extent or the direction of policy change from the given political context, in the absence of detailed information about parties' legislative records.

According to social identity theory, a sense of identity takes place through social categorization through which individuals define who they are and who others are (Tajfel and Turner 1979; for a recent review, see Kinder and Kam 2009). Although this literature – specifically, what is known as the minimal group paradigm – demonstrates that mere categorization based on an arbitrary criterion is sufficient to produce discriminatory intergroup behaviors in the form of ingroup favoritism, its goal is not to deny the role of objective conflicts of interest. Tajfel (1981, 223) himself asserts that “this theory cannot replace the economic and social analysis, but must be used to supplement it.” When such categorization is combined with the real conflicts of group interests, such identification can be further strengthened. When there exists no difference in the benefit each political party provides, it may not be always easy to form a strong identity with a particular party over the others. To the contrary, the greater utility differential between the parties can make us better distinguish/categorize “our party” versus “their parties,” and to form positive attachment toward “our party.”

Theories of motivated reasoning anticipate that citizens are always constrained by their partisan predispositions, even when they try to be accurate (Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006; see also Kunda 1990). “Partisan goals,” (or “directional goals”) which motivate people to apply their reasoning powers in defense of a prior belief, bias not only citizens’ judgments, but also the process through which those judgments are reached (Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006; Westen et al. 2006).¹¹ “The tension between the drives for accuracy and belief perseverance underlies all human reasoning”

¹¹ Bullock (2009) formally proves that enduring disagreement among partisans does not necessarily contradict the rational Bayesian updating perspective, and establishes conditions under which learning will create agreement and conditions under which it will promote disagreement.

(Taber and Lodge 2006, 756). However, people tend to believe what they wish only to the extent they feel the evidence could satisfy the other category of motives, accuracy goals (Groenendyk 2009; Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006). That is, motivated reasoning would be contingent on one's capacity to justify or rationalize that judgment. "When one wants to draw a particular conclusion, one feels obligated to construct a justification for that conclusion that would be plausible to a dispassionate observer" (Kunda 1990, 493). Thus, the clearer party differentials can serve as this justification for one's leaning toward his or her partisan predisposition. Conversely, when they perceive little party differential, all but the most fervent partisans would find it difficult to construct a seemingly reasonable justification for their partisan leaning.

In sum, political institutions can significantly affect the partisan's cognition and motivation as well as her rational utility calculation by shaping the levels of potential policy changes. I hypothesize that as the institutional constraints on policy change increase, citizens are less likely to become partisans.

2.4 Data and Methods

I test my hypothesis using two different sets of cross-sectional survey data from the ANES and the CSES (modules 1-3) to examine the variation in mass partisanship both over time in the United States and across countries. This broad coverage serves not only to increase confidence about empirical evidence that supports the proposed hypothesis, but also to establish the generalizability of the findings while contributing to the established literature that has originally been developed to study U.S. politics.

The ANES and the CSES collect important information about individual opinions and cover a broad range of elections over time and across countries. However, given the goal of this study, both a contextual-level dataset that measures institutional constraints and a data set that specifies individual-level variables such as partisanship and other demographic information are necessary. For this purpose, I combine two survey datasets with different measures of institutional constraints and other contextual-level covariates.

The proposed relationship between institutional gridlock and partisanship is less likely to hold for countries where political parties do not serve their relevant roles that democratic systems require. For example, where political parties cannot play any roles in aggregating people's political demands and mobilizing people to influence the policy-making process, people may not be able to form any attachment to political parties. However, to test my hypothesis for a broad spectrum of countries, I include both new democracies and old democracies where voters have at least two competing political parties to choose from in the election. Specifically, I focus on democracies that satisfy the minimalist criteria that are proposed by Adam Przeworski and his colleagues (Alvarez et al. 1996; Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2009; Przeworski et al. 2000). According to what they later call Democracy-Dictatorship (DD) measure, "democracies are regimes in which governmental offices are filled as a consequence of contested elections" (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2009, 69). This concept is minimalist, especially compared to two other commonly-used measures of political regimes: the Freedom House measure that is based on more than 25 checklist questions regarding political rights and civil liberties, and the Polity IV measure that records key qualities of political regime including constraints on

the chief executive.¹² My sample covers the surveys conducted in 114 election surveys across 49 democracies where political parties play a meaningful role in politics. While the repeated cross-sectional ANES surveys cover elections in the United States since 1948, I focus on 20 survey years between 1964 and 2008, due to the availability of measures for main variables. The specific measures and procedures are as follows.

For the ANES data, I use the traditional questions to measure partisanship. I code “strong identifiers,” “weak identifiers,” and “leaners” as “partisans” while coding the other respondents as “non-partisans.” For additional analyses to increase confidence about the finding, I replace this dichotomous measure of partisanship with two alternative measures: 1. the same dichotomous measure with a different coding method (partisans excluding leaners), and 2. an ordinal measure of ‘strength of partisanship’ (0: nonpartisan or

¹² One notable complication emerges from the DD measure’s strict scrutiny over the case where some incumbents who have come to power via contested elections have eliminated them while in office. In cases like this, Przeworski and his colleagues code as non-democratic all the years from the moment the incumbent came to power to the moment when contested elections were eliminated. As they point out, it is difficult to distinguish (1) regimes where incumbents never lose power because they are popular but would step down if they did lose elections, from (2) regimes in which incumbents hold elections only because they know they will not lose them and would not step down if they did lose (Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2009). This problem is addressed if they can observe whether incumbents allowed the opposition to assume office when they finally lost, but they use caution in classifying regimes as democracies, and thus code as dictatorship the cases where such retrospective identification is not available. The DD measure identify such cases using a variable called “Type II,” an indicator variable coded one if the dictatorship presents a possible Type II error – i.e., a false negative – and zero otherwise. Given my research question in this paper, I include most elections with the Type II variable coded one into my analysis, as long as voters have at least two political parties to choose from. For this purpose, I refer to the Polity IV as a complimentary measure to identify such cases. The Polity scores are often converted into regime categories in a categorization of “autocracies” (-10 to -6), “anocracies” (-5 to +5 and three special values: -66, -77 and -88), and “democracies” (+6 to +10). Thus, an election which is coded as dictatorship but whose Type II variable is coded one by the DD measure is also included into my analysis as long as its Polity score is 6 or greater. Mexico (1997), Russia (2000, 2004), South Africa (2009), and Krygyzstan (2005) are such examples. Peru (2000), and Russia (1999) whose Type II variable is coded one are dropped as their Polity score are less than 6. Belarus (2001, 2008), and Thailand (2000) do not satisfy the DD’s minimalist standard. I omit Belgium (1999) as its measurement is not comparable to the rest of the sample, as previous studies do (Huber, Kernell, and Leoni 2005; Lupu 2014)

independent, 1: leaner, 2: weak partisan, 3 strong partisan) to assess whether institutional constraints on policy change not only encourage citizens to become partisans, but also strengthen their partisanship.

For cross-national analysis, my measure of partisanship relies on one of the most widely used approach in comparative studies (Huber, Kernell, and Leoni 2005; Lupu 2014; Dalton and Weldon 2007) using the CSES data. The CSES survey asks respondents in each country, “do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?” If a respondent replies “yes” to the question, he or she is coded as a partisan. All other respondents are coded as “non-partisans.”

Institutional constraints on policy change is a central notion in this study, and I use several different measures to increase the validity of the measurement and the robustness of the findings. The first measure, Henisz’s *Political Constraint Index (POLCON)* provides a valid approximate measure of institutional theories on veto players (or veto points) by directly capturing “the feasibility of a change in policy given the structure of a nation’s political institutions (the number of veto points) and the preferences of the actors that inhabit them (the partisan alignment of various veto points and the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the preferences within each branch)” (Henisz and Zelner 2010). This measure first identifies the number of independent government branches (executive, lower and upper chambers of the legislature) with veto power over policy change, and weights this by the extent of alignment across these branches, using data on party composition of the executive and the legislature. The measure is then further modified to capture the extent of preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch. Possible scores for the final measure of political constraints range from zero (least constrained) to one (most

constrained) while they do from 0.112 (Brazil in 2006) to 0.72 (Belgium in 2003) in my sample. This measure is consistent with the theoretical insights supported by Tsebelis (1995, 2002) and Cox and McCubbins (2001). An important advantage of this measure is that it provides the most comprehensive coverage of countries and time periods (more than 200 countries, 1800-2012, though not necessarily continuously) while paying special attention to the institutional consequences for policy stability.

An analysis of the ANES data may require an alternative measure that captures a more nuanced variation over time within the United States, compared to the analysis of the CSES data which requires a measure that can cover the broadest range of countries with diverse institutional characteristics across countries in a common framework. Despite its broad coverage, this *POLCON* measure may not successfully reflect temporal dynamics within the US context. For the purpose of capturing the most relevant institutional feature of the policy gridlock, I utilize Keith Krehbiel's (1996; 1998) gridlock interval. I construct this institutional variable using Poole and Rosenthal's DW-NOMINATE scores that estimate the ideological positions of legislators.¹³ Alternatively, I also use the veto players data developed by Tsebelis (1995; 2002) and refined/extended by Ha (2007) to include the United States. This data provides a measure of veto players operationalized in terms of institutional and partisan divisions (the effective number of veto players, and the ideological distance among them). This alternative measure enables additional tests to

¹³ Note that there were changes in the cloture rule during this period. Before 1958, cloture required 67 votes (two-thirds of all members). Between 1959 and 1974 cloture required two thirds of those voting, which this analysis assumes to be 64 votes. This formulation follows Coleman (1999) and is also used by Chiou and Rothenberg (2003). Finally, from 1975 through the present, cloture has required 60 votes. see Coleman (1999, 833) for the detailed description.

compare with the findings from the CSES data and to increase the robustness of the findings.

To isolate the effect of institutional constraints on partisanship, I include control variables that are commonly used to measure other contextual-level factors, individual-level political characteristics, and demographic variables. As pointed out above, previous literature has focused on the way the process of social modernization influences contributes to a slow and steady erosion in citizens' attachment to political parties. To account for this possibility, I control for the GDP per capita which serves as a proxy for the average income or level of socio-economic development. Partisanship may be associated with the structure of social cleavages, as conflicts and controversies arising out of social divisions provide the demand for distinctive representation and the driving force behind the development of political parties (e.g., Lipset and Rokkan 1967). To measure this variable, I follow previous studies that employ the sum of ethnic and religious fractionalization indices described in Alesina et al. (2003). I also control for the log of the average of the ages of parties at each election survey, to account for the previous arguments that older democracies tend to have more partisans (Dalton and Weldon 2007).¹⁴ Other contextual-level economic factors such as unemployment and inflation may influence the likelihood that citizens become partisans (Hibbs 1989). I also pay attention to important historical context in analyzing the ANES data from 1964 to 2008. After the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, social unrest and more, the era of partisan dealignment of the late 1960s and 1970s (Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Bartels 2000; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Hetherington 2001; Wattenberg 1994) shook up the existing party system as well as the

¹⁴ The data on the average age of parties come from the *World Bank Database of Political Institutions 2012* originally developed by Beck et al. (2001).

white southerners' political orientations. To account for this critical context, I include a dummy variable for the dealignment period, in addition to the individual-level covariates for southerners and race.¹⁵

Moreover, an individual-level factor such as citizens' political ideology is likely to influence their tendencies to become partisans. Given that I focus on whether the respondent is a partisan or not, an individual's ideological strength, rather than the left-right spectrum, may matter in shaping her party loyalty. I therefore control for how ideologically extreme a respondent is.¹⁶ According to the dealignment hypothesis, higher levels of cognitive resources diminish the role of political parties within the democratic process and thus weaken an individual's partisanship. To account for this argument, I also control for the respondent's level of education.¹⁷ Finally, I also control for a set of sociodemographic variables: income, gender, and age.

The hypothesis tested here focuses on how institutional context at the macro level shapes the formation of mass partisanship at the micro level; multilevel estimation techniques can clarify and explicitly model this relationship. To account for this multilevel structure of the data and the dichotomous measure of my dependent variable, I employ the following multilevel logit model with a random intercept to analyze the CSES data and the

¹⁵ The findings are consistent with the analysis results with an alternative dummy variable that accounts for only 1960s, or without this contextual dummy variable.

¹⁶ The ANES survey question that measures ideological self-placement is available only beginning in 1972. Following Stegmueller's (2013) advice on the sample size for multilevel analysis, I increase the contextual-level sample size into 20 by using feeling thermometers on liberals and conservatives available since 1964. The difference between these two feelings thermometers can be interpreted as a measure of ideological orientation, as used in previous studies (see, for example, Green 1988, and citations therein). Using the measure of ideological self-placement does not change the significance of my results.

¹⁷ An ideal measure would be better captured by the respondent's political sophistication. But due to the serious challenge regarding the comparability and reliability across countries and time, previous studies have used the level of education given the strong correlation between educational attainment and political knowledge.

ANES data. This statistical model is weighted using the design and demographic weights provided in each dataset along with a weight to address different sample size across survey years.

$$\begin{aligned}
& \text{Log}\left[\frac{\Pr(\text{Partisanship}_{ij} = 1)}{1 - \Pr(\text{Partisanship}_{ij} = 1)}\right] \\
&= \beta_j^0 + \beta_j^{\text{Ideological strength}} \text{Ideological strength}_{ij} + \beta_j^{\text{Age}} \text{Age}_{ij} \\
&\quad + \beta_j^{\text{Education}} \text{Education}_{ij} \\
&\quad + \beta_j^{\text{Individual_Level Controls}} \text{Individual_Level Controls}_{ij} + e_{ij} \\
&\beta_j^0 = \gamma^0 + \gamma^{\text{Institutional Constraints}} \text{Institutional Constraints}_j \\
&\quad + \gamma^{\text{Party Age (Logged)}} \text{Party Age (Logged)}_j \\
&\quad + \gamma^{\text{Social Heterogeneity}} \text{Social Heterogeneity}_j \\
&\quad + \gamma^{\text{GDP per capita}} \text{GDP per capita}_j \\
&\quad + \gamma^{\text{Contextual_Level Controls}} \text{Contextual_Level Controls}_j + u_j^0
\end{aligned}$$

In an analysis of the ANES data, I also include the level-2 (survey-year) mean of the lagged dependent variable to account for temporal dynamics, by adapting a standard practice.¹⁸

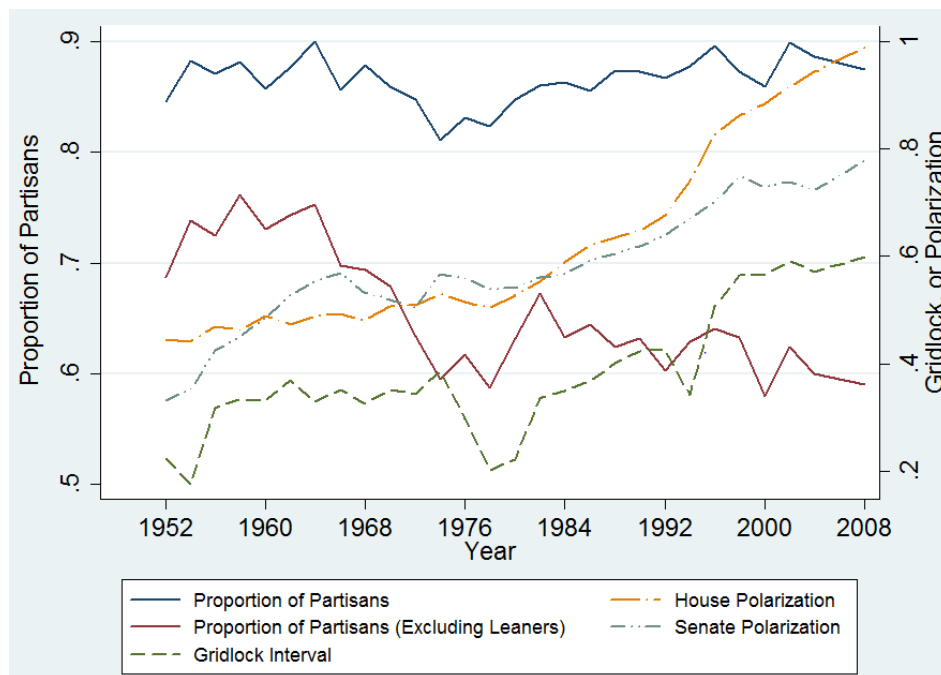
2.5 Analysis Results

Figure 2.1 plots the proportion of partisans with several key attributes of context variables, including the gridlock interval and alternative measures of party polarization, over time in the United States. Compared to the measures of party polarization (which are largely

¹⁸ The findings are consistent with the analysis results without this temporal dynamics. In fact, the magnitude and the statistical significance of the institutional effect are mostly stronger in the analysis without this adjustment.

increasing), the proportion of partisans and the gridlock interval rise and fall over time. It is notable that the proportion of partisans excluding learners, i.e., strong partisans and weak partisans, has been largely decreasing while the proportion of partisans including the independents who are leaning toward one of the two parties has been fairly stable. Given that almost all the previous studies predict that party polarization will lead to the rise of partisanship, this counter-intuitive evidence at the aggregate level needs a theoretical explanation. Although this pattern does not provide a precise description of the relationship between individual partisanship and institutional arrangements, we can see they tend to go hand in hand, but largely in the opposite direction.¹⁹

Figure 2.1 Partisans, Gridlock, and Polarization in the United States



¹⁹ Given that we are interested in the impact of macro-level institutional context on micro-level partisanship, interpreting aggregated data at the individual level can accompany the ecological fallacy or 'Robinson effect'.

**Table 2.1 Multilevel Logit Model on Institutional Constraints and Mass
Partisanship
(NES, 1964-2008)**

	<i>Gridlock Interval</i>		<i>Veto Players (Number)</i>		<i>Veto Player (Ideological Distance)</i>	
	Coefficient	Std Error	Coefficient t	Std Error	Coefficient	Std Error
Contextual Characteristics						
Gridlock Interval	-0.695 *	0.290				
Veto Players (Number)			-0.136 *	0.062		
Veto Players (Ideological Distance)					-0.133 **	0.050
Proportion of Partisans (Lagged)	-0.126	1.198	-1.382	1.142	-1.928	1.067
Dealignment Period	-0.083	0.064	-0.029	0.060	-0.029	0.054
Unemployment	-0.038 **	0.014	-0.023	0.018	-0.032	0.016
Inflation	-0.029 **	0.011	-0.027 **	0.009	-0.055 **	0.010
Individual Characteristics						
Ideological Strength	0.443 **	0.044	0.443 **	0.044	0.361 **	0.044
Female	0.131 **	0.031	0.132 **	0.031	0.197 **	0.031
Age	0.020 **	0.002	0.020 **	0.002	0.017 **	0.002
Black	0.077 **	0.019	0.020 **	0.002	0.483 **	0.075
Southerner	-0.108	0.070	-0.106 *	0.054	-0.105 *	0.054
Income	0.107 **	0.013	0.108 **	0.013	0.078 **	0.013
Education	0.150 **	0.012	0.149 **	0.012	0.089 **	0.012
Constant	0.583 **	0.012	1.519	1.028	1.722	0.961
Random Effects						
St. Dev. Random Intercept	0.078	0.005	0.150	0.032	0.150	0.031
Observations	31220		31220		31220	
Surveys	20		20		20	
Log-Likelihood	-11313.643		-11313.176		-11312.766	

Note: ** p < .01, * p < .05. Two-tailed tests of statistical significance.

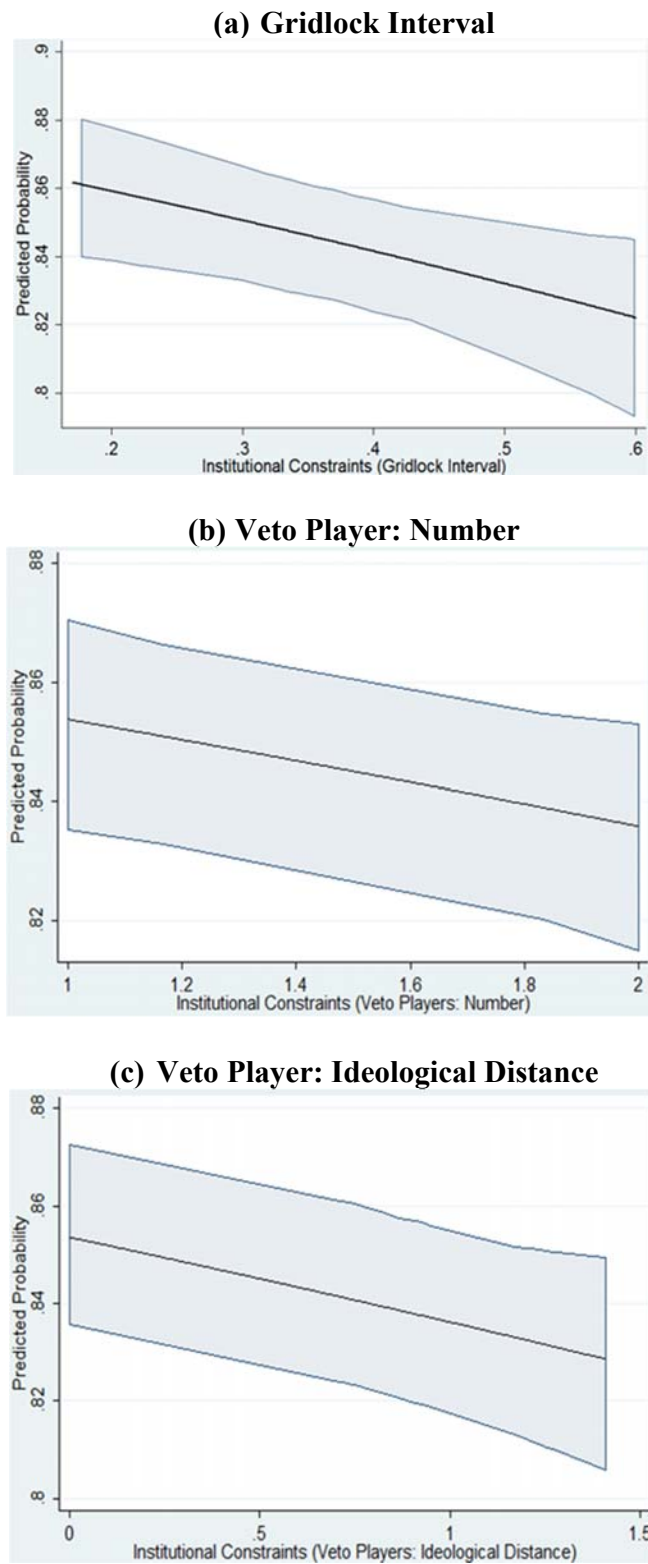
The multilevel analysis results of the ANES data are summarized in Table 2.1. The results in the first column of Table 2.1 present empirical evidence that supports my hypothesis. US citizens are more likely to become partisans, when gridlock interval shrinks (that is,

when the institutional configuration makes greater policy change possible). The other individual characteristics show the expected effects on the likelihood of becoming partisans: more ideologically extreme, and older citizens are more likely to become partisans.

Note that educated US citizens are more likely to become partisans, consistent with recent individual-level analysis results (Albright 2009; Dassonneville, Hooghe, and Vanhoutte 2012; Dassonneville, Hooghe, and Vanhoutte 2014; Joslyn and Haider-Markel 2014; Arzheimer 2015; see also Huber et al. 2005 for a similar result) that contradict the effect of cognitive mobilization in Dalton's dealignment hypothesis. In addition, my results show that women are more partisan than men in the United States. On the other hand, I do not find any significant effects of other country-level covariates on mass partisanship except the negative effect of inflation.

This correlation between individual partisanship and institutional context still holds with alternative measures of institutional constraints: the number of veto players and their ideological distance, as represented in the second and third columns of Table 2.1. Specifically, citizens are less likely to become partisans, when the number of veto players, or the ideological distance among them increases, that is, when there is divided government. In particular, party polarization may not automatically translate into resurgence of partisanship as existing studies suggest. Instead, when the ideological distance between two parties is large and, hence, divided government leads to policy gridlock, citizens are less likely to be partisans. Conversely, citizens are more likely to become partisans if one political party controls both the legislative and executive branches and, thus, significant policy changes are expected. This finding suggests the existing predictions that directly

Figure 2.2 Predicted Probability of Becoming a Partisan across Alternative Measures of Institutional Constraints



connect party polarization and the patterns of partisanship should take into account institutional context in which partisans form loyalty to their party.

Inspection of the model's predicted probabilities would be a more intuitive way to understand the model's implications. Specifically, based on the information from Table 2.1, Figure 2.2 shows the predicted probability of becoming a partisan across alternative measures of institutional constraints on policy change, with all other continuous variables held at their sample means and ordered variables held at their sample medians. Each panel in this figure also shows a simulation-based 95% confidence interval around the predicted probabilities. The confidence intervals are calculated by repeatedly drawing a sample of model parameter values from the estimated asymptotic sampling distribution (1000 repetitions).

The effects of institutional constraints on the probability of a citizen having a party attachment are clear from this figure. In my dataset, the predicted probabilities of becoming a partisan are 0.86 for the lowest level of gridlock interval (0.177 in 1954) and 0.82 for the highest level (0.599 in 2008). The extent of possible changes in the predicted probabilities may look small across the ranges of three different measures of institutional constraints, these effects are actually significant considering that partisanship is fairly stable in the United States.²⁰ Moreover, as in Figure 2.1, the gridlock intervals can change rapidly as a result of an election, as do veto players.

I re-examine the robustness of this dynamic relationship by employing two alternative measures of partisanship: 1. a dichotomous measure of partisans excluding

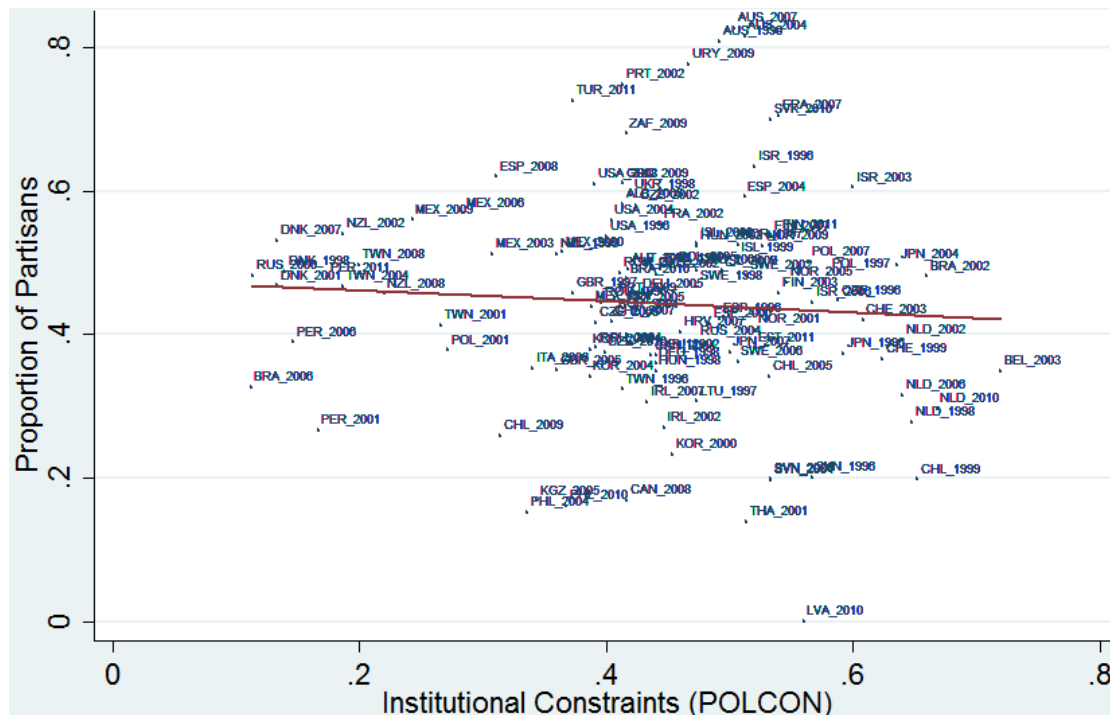
²⁰ As expected, the extent of possible change is much larger when focusing on only the partisans who are either strong identifiers or weak identifiers (excluding leaners). The predicted probabilities of becoming a partisan are 0.69 and 0.55 respectively for the highest (0.599 in 2008) and the lowest level (0.177 in 1954) of the gridlock intervals in my dataset.

leaners, and 2. an ordinal measure of the strength of individual partisanship. When focusing on only the partisans who are either strong identifiers or weak identifiers, the magnitude of the coefficient for the gridlock interval becomes larger, as does its statistical significance (see Table 2A.1 in Appendix). In addition, multilevel ordinal logit analysis demonstrates that the institutional constraints significantly reduce the strength of citizens' partisanship as well, in a consistent way across the three different measures (gridlock interval, the number of veto players, and the ideological distance among them, see Table 2A.2 in Appendix). That is, not only citizens are more likely to become partisans, but also they develop more solid partisanship when political institutions allow a large extent of policy change.

Can this finding hold outside the United States? To further test the generalizability of my account, I shift attention to diverse democracies abroad. First, Figure 2.3 plots the proportion of partisans with institutional constraints measured by *POLCON* at each country-year with respect to diverse democracies (114 elections across 49 countries). It hints a negative relationship between institutional constraints on policy change and mass partisanship across democracies, consistent with the proposed hypothesis. However, again, I focus on testing whether individuals are more likely to become partisans where political institutions produce greater policy change, using multilevel analysis.

The statistical analysis of the CSES data confirms the empirical findings from the ANES data, as summarized in Table 2.2. The negative and statistically significant coefficient associated with *POLCON* indicates that citizens are less likely to become partisans as the institutional constraints on policy change increase. Figure 2.4 represents the impact of institutional constraints on partisanship in graphical form, based on this

Figure 2.3 Institutional Constraints and Mass Partisanship across Democracies



analysis. Specifically, it shows the predicted probability of becoming a partisan across the range of institutional constraints on policy change, with all other continuous variables held at their sample means and ordered variables held at their sample medians.

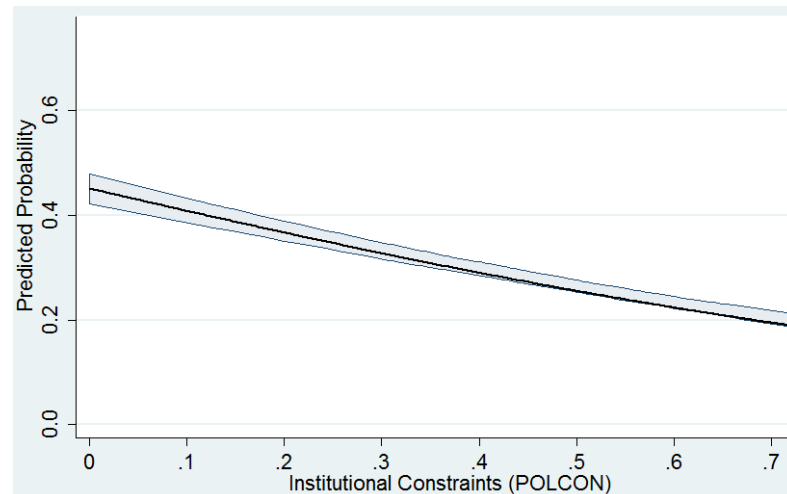
This figure also shows a simulation-based 95% confidence interval around the predicted probability. In the CSES sample, the predicted probability of becoming a partisan is only 0.18 for Belgium in 2003 with the highest level of institutional gridlock (POLCON = 0.720). For the case of the lowest level of institutional gridlock (POLCON = 0.112), for example, Brazil in 2006 in my sample, the predicted probability is 0.40. Given that partisanship is fairly stable, particularly in the advanced democracies that make up the majority of my samples, Figure 2.4 demonstrates the significant impact of institutional context on mass partisanship.

Table 2.2. Multilevel Logit Model on Institutional Constraints and Mass Partisanship (CSES, Module 1, 2, and 3)

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Contextual Characteristics		
POLCON	-1.751 **	0.114
Party Age (Log)	0.339 **	0.020
Social Heterogeneity	-0.179 **	0.052
GDP per capita	0.000 **	0.000
Inflation	0.030 **	0.002
Unemployment	0.017 **	0.005
Individual Characteristics		
Ideological Strength	0.173 **	0.019
Income	0.029 **	0.008
Age	0.002 *	0.001
Education	-0.038	0.020
Female	-0.131 **	0.040
Constant	-0.610 **	0.133
Random Effect		
St. Dev. Random Intercept	0.590	0.016
Observations	152906	
Surveys	114	
Log-Likelihood	-69855547	

Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. Two-tailed tests of statistical significance.

Figure 2.4. Institutional Constraints and Predicted Probability of Becoming a Partisan



Additionally, the effect of *Party Age* (logged) is positive and statistically significant, consistent with the previous expectation. The older, presumably more institutionalized the

party system, the more citizens become partisans. On the other hand, *Social Heterogeneity* is negatively associated with the likelihood of becoming partisans.²¹ With respect to the dealignment hypothesis, the effect of socio-economic development (measured by the GDP per capita) on individual-level partisanship is statistically significant, but its magnitude is minimal when analyzed in a broad sample of diverse democracies. Moreover, I find no evidence that education discourages party attachment, in contrast to the implication of the previous argument that cognitive resources would weaken an individual's partisanship. The other individual-level covariates also show the expected effects on the likelihood of becoming partisans, except the effects of *female*. In the CSES data, women are less partisan than men.

Put together, greater institutional constraints on policy change significantly decrease the probability of becoming a partisan, and this finding holds for alternative measures, different statistical models, and different data sources that cover both the United States and diverse democracies, even after taking into account important existing explanations. This empirical evidence bolsters my institutional account of partisanship.

2.6 Conclusion

Previous studies on mass partisanship have rarely paid attention to institutional dynamics despite the critical roles political institutions serve in determining the party

²¹ This result is somewhat unexpected. In fact, the previous studies report inconsistent results regarding the impact of the social divisions. While Huber et al. (2005) find a positive and statistically significant effect, Lupu (2014) finds no such evidence. He points out the countervailing effect of social heterogeneity. That is, if social groups like unions, or ethnic groups are also associated with political parties, then membership in these groups can encourage citizens to identify with parties. On the other hand, if multiple membership in these social groups cross-pressures citizens, they may not encourage partisanship.

differentials and, in turn, mass partisanship. My institutional approach offers an alternative and generalizable explanation for the variation in mass partisanship over time in the United States and across countries. Political institutions at the macro level can affect mass partisanship at the micro level as they shape the extent of policy change. A citizen's estimate of the utility-differential between the parties is increased under the institutional context where larger degrees of policy changes are possible. By connecting alternative behavioral theories on partisanship with institutional analysis, I find that as the institutional constraints on policy change increase, citizens are less likely to become partisans, using multilevel analyses of two large-scale survey data that cover the US (1964-2008) as well as 114 election surveys across 49 countries. I scrutinize the robustness of this systematic relationship between institutional configurations and partisanship using alternative measures and statistical models.

This approach enables us to explain the patterns of partisanship across diverse democracies in a consistent way regardless of the level of their institutional complexity, providing the broadest empirical examination yet conducted on this question. It departs from most existing studies that mainly focus on U.S. politics or only the advanced democracies and exclude new democracies. My institutional account can explain important temporal variation in partisanship in the United States, and it can be applied to explain much broader contextual variation existing in diverse democracies including new democracies. Given the existing arguments that partisanship may signal the development of stable party system and democratic consolidation, my analysis may contribute to a broader literature.

My institutional framework is also compatible with alternative conceptualizations of partisanship, from rational-choice models to social identity theory to a theory of motivated reasoning. In this approach, I incorporate the policy dimension into our understanding of partisanship by emphasizing the significant role of political institutions in constraining or facilitating policy change. Partisans do care about policy outcomes and those outcomes are significantly determined by the institutional configurations.

In particular, my account also brings a new perspective to the recent debate over the impact of party polarization on public opinion. While almost all the previous studies predict that party polarization would accompany the rise of mass partisanship, this prediction stands in contrast to the empirical observation that mass partisanship at the aggregate level has been fairly stable, if not in decline, over time in the United States despite the unprecedented polarization between the two major parties.²² I offer both the theoretical explanation and empirical evidence that party polarization may not always lead to the rise of mass partisanship; rather such polarization can actually lead to the decline of mass partisanship as a result of its interplay with institutional configurations, and subsequent policy gridlock.

That is, when the polarization of key institutional actors such as political parties, or pivotal actors leads to policy stability, mass partisanship is likely to be reduced. Consistent with the prior studies, party polarization *may* lead to greater mass partisanship, but only under certain conditions. For example, when the same political party controls both Congress and the White House in the United States (to be more precise, when you have fewer number of veto players or, when the gridlock interval is very small and does not

²² See also Fiorina and Abrams 2008; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2008; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005 for the finding that the American public is no more polarized today than before.

include the status quo policy) and thus sweeping policy changes are possible, people are likely to be partisan. However, especially in the context of the United States, polarization is more likely to produce more gridlock and less policy change during periods of divided government. This relative policy stability can decrease the likelihood that one becomes a partisan by decreasing his or her estimate of party differential. Thus, my alternative approach predicts that the impact of party polarization on the mass partisanship depends on its interaction between the structure and the preference configuration of political institutions. In particular, given the important disparity between actual and predicted patterns of partisanship in the United States, my account suggests the unexplored countervailing process that party polarization can constrain the resurgence of partisanship and even lead to partisan decline. This article demonstrate how two lines of research that have been studied separately can meet and how such theoretical connection can provide new insights to reshape our previous understanding of partisanship and to better address an important current issue such as the impact of political polarization on public opinion. Scholars should recognize the institutional dynamics and policy consequences that party polarization generates.

My results point to several potential areas for future research. First, further research needs to verify the causal links that connect the macro-level institutional context to the meso-level policy outcomes to the micro-level partisanship. Although the most recent studies report some promising results that citizens can infer the policy implications from a given institutional context (Vowles 2010; Fortunato and Stevenson 2013; Hahm 2015), much work remains. For example, there are theoretical reasons to believe that the effects of political context should depend on other important covariates including political

sophistication (e.g., Huber et al. 2005). Also, future studies need to examine whether such institutional attributes also shape the *impact* of partisanship on other political beliefs and actions, not only the *magnitude* of mass partisanship. Considering a broad spectrum of studies that document the pervasive influence of partisanship, we might ask whether we can also find the systematic relationship between institutional context and various behavioral outcomes generated by partisan bias. The studies that attempt to address these questions would help us construct a more complete picture of the nature and the extent of partisanship that can affect important political actions and policy outcomes.

Appendix 2A

Table 2A.1 Multilevel Logit Model on Institutional Constraints and Mass Partisanship: Alternative Dependent Variable - Partisans excluding Leaners (NES, 1964-2008)

<i>Institutional Constraint Model (Partisans Excluding Leaners)</i>			
	Coeff	SE	P-value
<i>Contextual Characteristics</i>			
Gridlock Interval	-1.326	0.439	0.003
Proportion of Partisans (Lagged)	-0.793	1.88	0.673
Unemployment	-0.024	0.041	0.547
Inflation	-0.033	0.014	0.021
Dealignment Period	-0.089	0.064	0.168
<i>Individual Characteristics</i>			
Ideological Strength	0.233	0.029	0.000
Female	0.254	0.037	0.000
Age	0.02	0.001	0.000
Black	0.575	0.065	0.000
Income	0.065	0.017	0.000
Education	0.008	0.011	0.488
Constant	0.562	1.91	0.769
<i>Random Effects</i>			
St. Dev. Random Intercept	0.091	0.005	
Observations	31220		
Surveys	20		
Log-Likelihood	-19614.308		

**Table 2A.2 Multilevel Model on Institutional Constraints and Partisan Strength:
Alternative Estimation on the Ordinal Measure - Multilevel Ordinal Logistic Model
(NES, 1964-2008)**

	<i>Gridlock Interval</i>			<i>Veto Player (Number)</i>			<i>Veto Player (Ideological Distance)</i>		
	Coeff.	SE	P-value	Coeff.	SE	P-value	Coeff.	SE	P-value
Contextual Characteristics									
Gridlock Interval	-0.533	0.189	0.005						
Veto Players (Number)				-0.105	0.056	0.062			
Veto Players (Ideological Distance)							-0.058	0.031	0.061
Proportion of Partisans (Lagged)	-0.033	0.123	0.790	-0.033	0.124	0.791	-0.032	0.124	0.796
Unemployment	-0.007	0.016	0.672	-0.004	0.018	0.829	-0.003	0.018	0.863
Inflation	-0.032	0.009	0.000	-0.025	0.009	0.004	-0.025	0.009	0.004
Individual Characteristics									
Ideological Strength	0.161	0.008	0.000	0.160	0.008	0.000	0.160	0.008	0.000
Female	0.117	0.012	0.000	0.118	0.012	0.000	0.118	0.012	0.000
Age	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.000	0.000
Income	0.008	0.006	0.169	0.008	0.006	0.152	0.008	0.006	0.151
Unemployed	-0.024	0.024	0.311	-0.025	0.024	0.300	-0.025	0.024	0.300
Education	-0.011	0.004	0.008	-0.011	0.004	0.005	-0.011	0.004	0.005
Constant	1.318	0.292	0.000	1.242	0.294	0.000	1.084	0.272	0.000
Random Effects									
St. Dev. Random Intercept	0.096	0.003		0.335	0.004		0.335	0.004	
Observations	26416			26416			26416		
Surveys	20			20			20		
Log-Likelihood	-36258.103			-36259.937			-36259.930		

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Chapter III

Change Partisans Can Believe In: Policy Change, Cues, and Partisan Beliefs

Abstract

Although the premise that the public can understand the policy implications of institutional attributes is central to many existing studies that connect political institutions and political behavior, this crucial assumption has not been fully scrutinized. Using a survey experiment over a large number of U.S. adults, I provide empirical evidence, in contrast to the well-established finding of citizen ignorance, that citizens infer the policy implications from the given institutional context, using “institutional cues” and “elite cues.” In particular, I find that Americans can shape expectations of policy change by relying on easily observable institutional characteristics such as divided government versus unified government in combination with elites’ opinions about expected policy change. Moreover, my findings show that this expectation of policy change strengthens partisan beliefs. These findings contribute to the literature on partisanship and an increasing number of studies that focus on institutional context in the field of comparative political behavior.

3.1 Introduction

A line of research centers on the premise that the public can perceive the extent of policy change from the given institutional context. For example, according to Downs (1957), voters make their vote choices, and other political decisions, based on their assessments of the similarity between their positions and those of the candidates, or parties. Downs himself (1957, 39) notes, however, that “if he is rational, he knows that no party will be able to do everything that it says it will do. Hence, he cannot merely compare platforms; instead he must estimate in his own mind *what the parties would actually do* were they in power” (Downs 1957, 39). Fiorina (1992, 64) states that the literature on policy balancing “presume[s] that some citizens have a general appreciation of the institutional structure of American government and that such institutional considerations enter into their voting decision”. In her comparative studies on parliamentary democracies, Kedar (2005a, 187) also “assume[s] that voters hold a belief about the prospects and nature of power sharing — a belief as to whether the party winning the prime ministry will be able to govern alone or will need to bargain with others — as well as about the distribution of power among parties.” In addition, a growing body of cross-national research that examines the effects of institutional contexts on political behavior also builds on the implicit premise that people can perceive and thus respond to the incentives and constraints provided by political institutions (e.g., Anderson 1997; Duch and Stevenson 2008; Hellwig 2002; Huber, Kernell, and Leoni 2005 ; Powell and Whitten 1993; Rudolph 2003). However, this premise has rarely been under theoretical and empirical scrutiny.

Can citizens understand how institutions work, or the policy implications of the given institutional context, and how? What are the behavioral implications of this

understanding? Considering that decades of behavioral research finds, with few exceptions, a highly uninformed citizenry (e.g., Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), the complexity of policy making process and institutional structure may further fuel skepticism about citizens' abilities to understand the policy implications of institutional structure. In this article, I view citizens as "cognitive misers" (Hewstone and Macrae 1994) who attempt to make efficient decisions under circumstances of limited information, limited ability to process information, and limited incentives to become politically engaged (Downs 1957; Popkin 1991). Citizens achieve this low-information rationality through the use of information shortcuts or heuristics (Delli Carpini 2009, 28; Popkin 1991). Accordingly, the literature documents the influences of various forms of heuristics, including opinion leaders (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Druckman 2001; Kuklinski and Hurley 1994; Mondak 1993a; Mondak 1993b; Nicholson 2011), party labels (e.g., Cohen 2003; Downs 1957; Rahn 1993), interest groups (Bowler and Donovan 1998; Lupia 1994), and the media (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey 1987).

This article examines how two distinct types of cues – what I call 'institutional cues' and 'elite cues' – available in institutional context enable citizens to shape their understanding of policy change, and how such perceptions affect partisan beliefs. In particular, I present a survey experiment that isolates the effects of both cues based on a large sample of U.S. adults whose demographics closely resemble the U.S. adult population. My experimental design permits direct evaluation of the relative impact of two cues, their interactive effect on policy perception, and subsequent consequences for partisan beliefs.

I find that citizens shape their policy perceptions in the given institutional context by relying on both cues regarding institutional attributes and cues from political elites,

challenging the longstanding yet dim view of citizen competence in the context of complex policy making processes. While easily accessible and direct elite opinions play a large role in forming citizens' perceptions, a relatively indirect cue that requires moderate informational processing shows a consistent effect as well. I also find that citizens use both cues effectively, rather than attending to the most effective cues while ignoring others. Lastly, the findings show that public perceptions of policy change strengthen partisan beliefs, suggesting micro-level foundations to link macro-level institutional arrangements and partisan behavior, one of the most studied forms of political behavior. Together, my findings not only advance our theoretical and empirical understanding about how citizens understand institutions and process but also illustrate why this research agenda merits further study. My study expands the scope of behavioral research that incorporates the role of institutional setting for policy making and provides the micro-foundation of a growing body of works that link political institutions and mass behavior.

This article is organized as follows. I first begin with a review of the literature that both motivates the study and provides its theoretical underpinnings. I then propose testable hypotheses and describe my data and methods. The last two sections present the results and discuss their implications for understandings citizens' capabilities to perceive the policy implications of institutional arrangements and their effects on partisan beliefs.

3.2 Institutional Cues, Elite Cues, and Perception of Policy Change

The policy-making process is inherently complex. It invites various political and social actors with different interests and ideas, and their interactions generate multifaceted dynamics within the rules and procedures structured by a broader institutional context.

Thus, understanding different policy making contexts and their consequences has been a major task for many political scientists, and numerous scholars have proposed different and competing explanations to understand this process. In the field of American politics, since Mayhew's (1991) seminal work on divided government, many scholars have paid attention to the theoretical and empirical significance of political institutions in terms of their ability to change the policy of the status quo (Krehbiel 1998; Brady and Volden 1998; Binder 1999; Coleman 1999; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003). In the field of comparative politics, Tsebelis (1995; 2002) develops a veto-players theory that provides an analytical framework to compare the ways diverse institutional arrangements generate policy stability (or instability) (see also Cox and McCubbins 2001). While there is a growing theoretical consensus that explains policy stability as a function of the array of preferences of key institutional actors, known as veto players or pivotal voters, and the location of the status quo, it would be very difficult to expect that any citizen can obtain and understand the detailed information and sufficient knowledge that is necessary to make a precise prediction of policy change, as political scientists do.

However, citizens may derive the best estimates from a wide range of potential heuristics and shortcuts either directly or indirectly from the given institutional context. Explanations of the processes by which citizens achieve the low-information rationality are grounded in dual process models of persuasion. Despite the nuanced difference between the two common models, such as the elaboration likelihood (Petty and Cacioppo 1986) and heuristic-systematic (Chaiken 1980) models, the literature of social psychology is grounded in dual-process models that differentiates two distinct processes involving in information processing: one process involves mindful and systematic processing of

substantive issue-relevant information, and the other entails the activation and application of heuristics and shortcuts. Given this nature, systematic processing requires both cognitive ability and capacity whereas heuristic processing requires relatively minimal cognitive demands. Given the established finding that most citizens lack knowledge of and interest in politics (Campbell et al. 1960; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), these models suggest that heuristic processing and contextual cues from political elites, experts, and the political environment may enable citizens to understand political institutions and policy making process (see Lupia and McCubbins. 1998; Popkin 1991; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991).

This study pays particular attention to two types of cues that can shape citizens' perceptions of policy change from the given institutional context. First, citizens can use statements by mass media, elected officials, or political experts as cues. Political elites provide "messages people use to infer other information and, by extension, to make decisions" (Bullock 2011, 497). Even though citizens cannot and do not calculate the so-called "gridlock interval" or the number of veto players of the current government, many Americans might have understood that the policy gridlock would result from the partisan control of the separate branches of government, when media and experts constantly reported on the federal government shutdown in October 2013.²³ Well-established literature demonstrates that even the least-well-informed citizens are able to make fairly

²³ The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Oct. 17-20 among 1,001 adults, finds that interest in the government shutdown rose steadily in the preceding month. In mid-September, 25% were paying very close attention to Congress working on an agreement to avoid a shutdown; interest reached 43% in early October, when the government closed its doors, and nearly half closely followed news about the end of the 16-day government shutdown ("Public Closely Tracks Agreement on Shutdown and Debt Limit High News Interest in Shutdown and Debt Limit Debate" <http://www.people-press.org/2013/10/22/public-closely-tracks-agreement-on-shutdown-and-debt-limit>).

reliable political judgments by relying on cues from various political elites, including opinion leaders (Druckman 2001; Kuklinski and Hurley 1994; Mondak 1993a; Mondak 1993b; Nicholson 2011; see also Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954), the media (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey 1987), political parties (Brader and Tucker 2012; 2013; Bullock 2011; Cohen 2003; Kam 2005; Rahn 1993), or interest groups (Bowler and Donovan 1998; Lupia 1994).

Second, citizens can also use the characteristics of political institutions as a heuristic to make inferences about potential policy change. For example, Fiorina (1992) argues that recent experience with divided control of government may give some voters both an incentive and a heuristic to assess political parties based on how the different branches' powers, in combination with political parties' positions, will produce policy outcomes. Lacy and Paolino (1998) find evidence that voters consider the power and issue positions of the executive and the legislature in their vote choices. Moreover, several recent studies directly examine the institutional sources of heuristic reasoning. Armstrong and Duch (2010) claim that voters use historical regularities in cabinet participation to anticipate which governing coalitions will form and make vote choice accordingly. Fortunato and his colleagues (Fortunato and Stevenson 2013; Fortunato and Adams 2015) demonstrate that voters infer parties' left-right positions (rather than automatically accept what parties promise)²⁴ from the composition of the national governing coalition. In particular, by analyzing 18 European countries, Fortunato and Stevenson (2013) find that

²⁴ Adams, Ezrow, Somer-Topcu's (2011) also find that citizens shape their own perceptions of the parties' positions, and do not directly accept parties' policy statements.

voters use coalition partnership as a heuristic to infer the direction of policy change in the absence of detailed information about parties' legislative records.²⁵

For a heuristic to be useful, it should be both cheap to obtain (relative to the cost of learning about the actual policy-making process) and relatively accurate (at least on average) (Lau and Redlawsk 2001, 952; Fortunato and Stevenson 2013, 463). In the context of American politics, easily observable institutional characteristics, such as whether a President comes from the same political party that controls Congress, may give them a sense of expected policy change,²⁶ even if the literature, to be precise, suggests that policy changes may be possible, even under divided government, if the ideological distance between the executive and the legislature is small, and the status quo is far away from all veto players (Tsebelis 2002), or if pivotal voters constitute a small gridlock interval (Krehbiel 1998).

While existing studies offer theoretical and empirical grounds for positing that elite cues and institutional cues enable citizens to understand institutions and policy making processes, there are at least three important aspects that need further study. First, there is well-established literature on the influence of elite cues, but how they can enable citizens understand institutions and policy making has rarely been studied. Second, despite increasing work on institutional cues, almost all the studies are based on evidence from observational data, and direct evidence is lacking. In this light, this article contributes to

²⁵ See also Adams, Ezrow, Wlezien (2015) for an application of a similar logic to the topic of European integration.

²⁶ Indeed, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996, 69) report an interesting finding that citizens' knowledge about institutions and process is relatively high, compared to the other areas including political leaders, domestic politics, and foreign affairs. They explained that it is consistent with the fact that institutions and processes tend to be fairly stable and thus require less regular monitoring and they are the domain consistently taught in the schools.

the existing studies by directly manipulating the institutional cues and evaluating their effects in comparison with elite cues, whose effects are well established by experimental studies.

Lastly, reliance on cues is more efficient for the recipient of the message than assembling and processing all the necessary information. However, cues or shortcuts can vary widely in terms of their utilities, functions, and credibility, among other things. Specifically, institutional cues are indirect in the sense that the attributes of institutional arrangements themselves do not directly reveal the implications of policy consequences. Thus, they require relatively more motivation and/or cognitive resources to process compared to elite cues, which are relatively direct and easy to process. On the other hand, institutional cues are less subjective than elite cues, as the former derives from the objective characteristics of given political objects an individual is evaluating. In contrast, the utility of the latter depends heavily on the source's credibility (e.g., Druckman 2001; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; see also Hovland and Weiss 1951). The credibility may vary with the sources' "knowledgeability" and "trustworthiness" (Lupia and McCubbins 1998). That said, citizens can use multiple cues – often consistent or congruent, but sometimes conflicting or competitive – to make political judgments. While this straightforward idea seems very intuitive, it demands further theoretical and empirical support in the context of existing studies. For example, Lupia and McCubbins (1998, 29) state that "people have an incentive to ignore many stimuli" and thus, "[i]f there are more shortcuts available than a person can attend to, then he or she attends to the shortcut that is cheapest and most highly correlated with pleasure and pain." Gigerenzer and colleague's "fast and frugal heuristics" offers another plausible account of why people may not use multiple cues (Gigerenzer,

Todd, and the ABC Research Group 1999). According to them, people use the boundedly-rational “Take-The-Best” heuristic (TTB). In particular, people rank cues according to predictive accuracy – what Gigerenzer and colleagues refer to as “cue validity” – and take the “best” piece of information (e.g., the most informative) while “ignoring the rest.” In a similar vein, although there has not been much research in political science examining multiple heuristics (see Chong and Druckman 2007; Nicholson 2011, as exceptions),²⁷ most of studies concentrate on the question of whether one dominates the other. This line of logic may suggest that people rely largely on elite cues that are more direct and easily accessible, but ignore other cues. To the extent that one cue plays a large role in shaping perceptions, another cue is less likely to be used.

This article, instead, pays attention to the presence of multiple dimensions in which cues are evaluated, and thus the possibility that one cue can reinforce or interfere with the other cue(s). To this end, I propose an experiment that isolates and compares the effects of both the institutional cue and the elite cue. I further examine the effects of congruent versus conflicting cues by analyzing the interactions of two types of political cues in shaping the perception of policy change. To summarize, the key hypotheses derived from the discussion above are as follows.

Hypothesis 1: Individuals are more likely to perceive possible policy change when institutional cues are available.²⁸

²⁷ Instead, most studies pay attention to the relative effect of cues and information – rather than competing cues or heuristics – and suggest that one dominates the other (e.g., Arceneaux 2008; Bullock 2011; Cohen 2003; Nicholson 2011; Rahn 1993; Slothuus and de Vreese 2010).

²⁸ That is, individuals are more likely to perceive significant policy changes when the cue of divided government is presented; they are less likely when the cues of unified government is presented.

Hypothesis 2: Individuals are more likely to perceive possible policy change when elite cues are available.²⁹

Hypothesis 3: Elite cues are more effective than institutional cues in shaping the perception of policy change.

Hypothesis 4a: The effects of institutional cues on policy perception increase when consistent institutional cues are available.

Hypothesis 4b: The effects of elite cues on policy perception increase when consistent institutional cues are available.

3.3 Perception of Policy Change, and Partisan Beliefs

Once citizens infer the expected policy change based on institutional cues or elite cues, this reasoning process can exert a significant influence on their partisan beliefs. In fact, the rational-choice perspective, such as Bayesian models proposed by Achen (1992) and Gerber and Green (1998), equates partisanship with Downs' core concept of "expected party differential." This notion derives from the comparison of the expected utilities an

Note that the institutional cues are coded as -1 (divided government), 0 (no institutional cues), and 1 (unified government) to reflect the direction of the information.

²⁹ Thus, individuals are more likely to perceive significant policy changes when the elite cue of policy change is presented; they are less likely when the elite cue of the status quo is presented. Similar to institutional cues, elite cues are coded as -1 (status quo), 0 (no elite cues), and 1 (policy change) to reflect the direction of the information.

individual would receive if each party were in office. If citizens perceive greater constraints on the extent of policy change, they are likely to know that the political party in power may matter less, as the comparative benefits of supporting one party over the other decrease. Conversely, to the extent to which significant policy changes are possible, the party in power is more likely to reach outcomes as close as possible to its ideal points. Subsequently, the question of which party holds power is more likely to matter, and subsequent partisan reasoning can be intensified.

While this notion of party differential has been primarily discussed against social-psychological studies, it is theoretically compatible with different conceptualizations of partisanship. According to social identity theory, a sense of identity takes place through social categorization through which individuals define who they are and who others are (e.g., Tajfel and Turner 1979). Although this literature – specifically, what is known as the minimal group paradigm – demonstrates that mere categorization based on an arbitrary criterion is sufficient to produce discriminatory intergroup behaviors in the form of ingroup favoritism, its goal is not to deny the role of objective conflicts of interest. Tajfel (1981, 223) himself asserts that “this theory cannot replace the economic and social analysis, but must be used to supplement it.” When such categorization is combined with the real conflicts of group interests, such identification can be further strengthened. Inasmuch as policy gridlock decreases a comparative benefit of a citizen’s party, he or she is less likely to form strong identity with his or her party over the others. To the contrary, the greater utility differential between the parties can make us better distinguish/categorize “our party” versus “their parties,” and to form positive attachments toward “our party.”

Theories of motivated reasoning anticipate that people are always constrained by their partisan predispositions, even when they try to be accurate (Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006; see also Kunda 1990). “Partisan goals,” (or “directional goals”), which motivate people to apply their reasoning powers in defense of a prior belief, bias not only citizens’ judgments but also the process through which those judgments are reached (Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006; Westen et al. 2006). “The tension between the drives for accuracy and belief perseverance underlies all human reasoning” (Taber and Lodge 2006, 756). However, people tend to believe what they wish only to the extent they feel the evidence could satisfy the other category of motives, accuracy goals (Groenendyk 2009; Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006). That is, motivated reasoning would be contingent on one’s capacity to justify or rationalize that judgment. “When one wants to draw a particular conclusion, one feels obligated to construct a justification for that conclusion that would be plausible to a dispassionate observer” (Kunda 1990, 493). Thus, clearer party differentials can serve as this justification for an individual’s leaning toward his or her partisan predisposition. Conversely, when a citizen perceives little party differential, all but the most fervent partisans would find it difficult to construct seemingly reasonable justifications for her partisan leaning.

In sum, the policy perceptions citizens derive from the given institutional context can shape their partisan beliefs. This theoretical expectation is particularly important in the sense that the existing studies that incorporate the policy implications of political institutions mostly limit their attention only to voting behavior (Fiorina 1992; Lacy and Paolino 1998; Kedar 2005). This article claims that partisan beliefs should vary with

perceptions of policy change that an individual derives from available institutional cues and/or elite cues. This suggests the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: When partisans expect larger extent of policy change, they are more likely to form partisan beliefs.

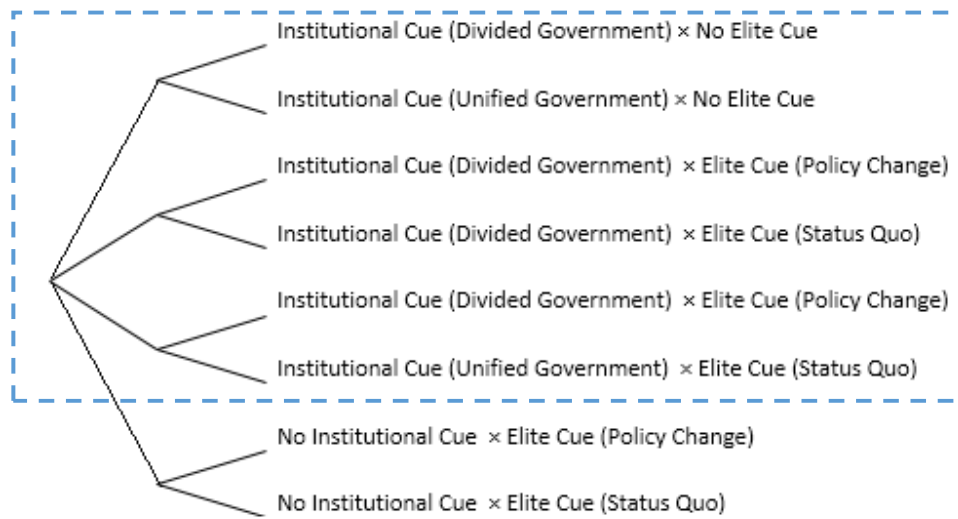
3.4 Experimental Design

I design and employ a novel experimental design by revising the parallel encouragement design. Under the parallel encouragement design, each subject is first randomly assigned to one of two groups. Then, for one group, the treatment is randomly assigned but no manipulation of mediator is conducted. For the other group, the researcher randomizes the treatment and the *indirect* manipulation to change the level of mediator. After the treatment, the mediator and the dependent variable are measured.³⁰ Note that this design, which is in the box with dotted line, resembles the 2 x 3 factorial design, as shown in Figure 3.1.³¹ By

³⁰ Comparatively, under the parallel design, each subject is first randomly assigned to one of two experiments; in one experiment only the treatment variable is randomized whereas in the other both treatment and the mediator are *randomized* (rather than *encouraged*). Imai et al. (2013, 6) note its two disadvantages compared to the parallel encouragement design. First, it is often difficult to manipulate the mediator perfectly. Second, even if such a manipulation is possible, the use of these designs requires the consistency assumption that the manipulation of the mediator should not affect the outcome through any pathway other than the mediator. Instead, the parallel encouragement design, as Imai and his colleagues demonstrate, has the potential to significantly improve the identification power of the previous Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach to what they call the single-experiment design by directly manipulating the intermediate variable that lies on the causal path from the treatment to the outcome (Imai et al. 2013).

³¹ Of course, the main variables in two different experimental designs are conceptualized and theorized in different ways. The major focus of this study views two cues as distinct factors that shape expectations of policy change, and incorporate this information in identifying the impact of such perception on partisan beliefs. On the other hand, under the parallel encouragement design, the treatment would be the institutional attributes (divided government vs. unified government), and the perception of policy change is encouraged by the priming procedure where we provide the elite opinions about expected policy change. However, the resemblance of the manipulations across the two designs enables me to combine them into a single experimental design.

Figure 3.1 Experimental Design



adding two additional conditions, which are outside the box with dotted line, I incorporate this design into the ten-condition, between-subject experiment, which corresponds to 3 [institutional cues] \times 3 [elite cues] factorial design that lacks one condition where both cues are not presented. Given that this study varies the levels of both factors (from no institutional cues to the institutional cue of either divided government or unified government; from no elite cues to the elite cue of either the status quo or policy change), such a modification does not preclude a test of the available cues and the dependent variables of interest.³²

One unique utility of this revised experimental design is that it enables us to conduct alternative statistical analyses of dynamic relationships among the main variables of interest. By embedding this experiment into the factorial design, I can test not only the

³² In the interest of simplicity, powered test, or research focus, scholars often exclude the control condition without any relevant information from the analysis (e.g., Chong and Druckman 2013; Levendusky and Malhotra 2015)

interaction effects between two cues, which is the main focus of the study, but also an alternative mediation relationship where information of institutional attributes may affect partisan beliefs through the perception of policy change as a mediator.

In addition, this design allows statistical analysis to overcome challenges of so-called encouragement designs. Given that the focus of the second part of this study is estimating the role of perception of policy change, subjects are only encouraged to perceive (rather than assigned to) certain levels of policy change. I utilize the experimental setup where cues to facilitate the subject's policy perception are randomly assigned and correct for the noncompliance issues inherent in experimental studies using the encouragement design.

In the survey experiment, all subjects receive short descriptions of an upcoming election with one of eight scenarios that reflect the conditions in Figure 3.1. These scenarios are designed to be as equivalent as possible, but vary in terms of whether they include institutional cues (divided government vs. unified government), elite cues (opinions about significant policy changes or the status quo), or both. Specifically, in the “institutional cue only” treatment groups, subjects are presented with a hypothetical scenario describing only the basic characteristics of the institutional context: divided government versus unified government in the given context of American politics. For example, *Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × No Elite Cue* group subjects read the following:

We would like to know your thoughts about an upcoming election. Please read the brief description that follows, and then, we will ask you several questions

about what you read. The 2016 United States elections will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016. At that time, the President of the United States will be elected. In addition, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested.

Suppose that we have a President from one political party and Congress controlled by another (For example, a President from the Republican Party while Congress controlled by the Democratic Party, or a President from the Democratic Party while Congress controlled by the Republican Party), as a result of the 2016 election.

Immediately after reading the description, participants are then asked to provide their subjective perceptions regarding the extent of policy change. Next, they are asked to rate how they feel towards the two major political parties on a scale of 0 to 100, and provide their opinions about party leaders' willing to compromise (see Appendix 2A.1 for detail).

On the other hand, in the "elite cue only" conditions, subjects will read party leaders' acknowledgement of difficulty in making policy changes (vs. their commitment to make policy changes) and experts' opinions that reflect such expectations. For example, right after the same brief description of an upcoming election, *No Institutional Cue × Elite Cue (Status Quo)* group subjects read the following:

Leading Republicans and Democrats have acknowledged that even if their party wins control, it would remain very difficult to make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be few, if any, significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, no matter who wins the White House and Congress.

In the “institutional cue + elite cue” conditions, subjects receive both the institutional cues and elite cues provided in the other conditions, with different combinations regarding the expected policy change. Thus, subjects in these groups can face both consistent cues and conflicting cues. For example, while subjects in the *Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × Elite Cue (Status Quo)* group receive cues about divided government and face reinforcing elite opinions, subjects in the *Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × Elite Cue (Policy Change)* receive cues of divided government with conflicting elite opinions. This experimental setting allows not only to isolate the effects of two cues but also to examine their interactive effects. (see Appendix 2A.1 for actual questions and description of stimuli)

To examine how institutional cues and elite cues affect public perceptions of policy change, and further analyze the subsequent consequences on partisan beliefs, I create several key variables. The main dependent variable of the first analysis is *Perception of Policy Change*, which serves as a key independent variable in the second analysis. This variable is coded as a five-point scale: 0 for subjects who think there will not be any significant policy changes, but 5 for those who think there will be complete policy changes

(0 for “Not at all,” 1 “A little,” 2 “A moderate amount,” 3 “A lot,” and 4 “Completely”). The dependent variables of the second analysis are *In-Group Favoritism* and *Opposition to Compromise*, which capture the extent of partisan beliefs of subjects who perceive different levels of policy change. The first variable, *In-Group Favoritism* is constructed from the commonly used feeling thermometer toward parties. This measure ranges from 0 to 100. Zero means very unfavorable and 100 means very favorable. Fifty means a subject does not feel favorable or unfavorable. By incorporating the subject’s party identification measure, this variable measures the subject’s feeling toward the party he or she identifies with.³³ Thus, subjects who identify as independents are missing from this variable. *Opposition to Compromise* is a variable that measures the subject’s attitudes toward party leaders’ willing to make compromises (or opposition to compromise) on a seven-category scale ranging from “more important to compromise” (coded as 0) to “more important to stick to their beliefs” (coded as 6). I also construct a *Partisan Beliefs* index by incorporating these two indicators through simple averaging, reflecting the expectation that each element of the index is partially substitutable.

Main independent variables are coded to reflect the direction of the information embedded in institutional cues and elite cues. For example, *Institutional Cues (Unified Government)* is coded as 1 while *No Institutional Cues* as 0, and *Institutional Cues (Divided*

³³ I focus on in-group favoritism in light of the literature that emphasizes the primacy of in-group favoritism (e.g., Allport 1954) and claims that in-group favoritism should be distinguished from out-group derogation (See Brewer 1999; see also Levin & Sidanius 1999, Singh et al. 1998).

Table 3.1 Summary Statistics of Subjects

	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Democrats	552	0.48	0.50	0	1
Republicans	552	0.34	0.47	0	1
Age	552	45.82	15.85	18	87
Education	534	3.33	1.03	1	7
Woman	552	0.52	0.50	0	1
Black	552	0.09	0.28	0	1
White	552	0.80	0.40	0	1
Income	530	4.78	3.45	1	15

Government) as -1. Similarly, *Elite Cues (Policy Change)* is coded as 1 while *No Elite Cues* as 0, and *Elite Cues (Status Quo)* as -1.

Participants were recruited from a demographically representative online panel pool maintained by the survey firm *Qualtrics*, which draws a panel using the stratified quota sampling method.³⁴ Five hundred and fifty two adult Americans participated in an online experiment in their own settings in late March 2015. In exchange for their participation, the panelists received cash value rewards credited to their online accounts. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 87, with a mean age of 45.82. Of this sample, 52% were women, and their party affiliation was 34% Republican, and 48% Democrat (including partisan leaners). The summary statistics are provided in Table 3.1. These demographic characteristics largely resemble those of the most recent 2010 U.S. census data and the 2012 American National Election Study (ANES). My data therefore have the benefits of both high internal validity (arising from random assignment in the experiment)

³⁴ In particular, my sample is constructed so that it is representative of the most recent 2010 U.S. census data in terms of several key demographic variables, including age and gender.

as well as high external validity (to better reflect the population as a whole, unlike most convenience samples).³⁵

3.5 Experimental Results

3.5.1 Cues and Policy Perceptions

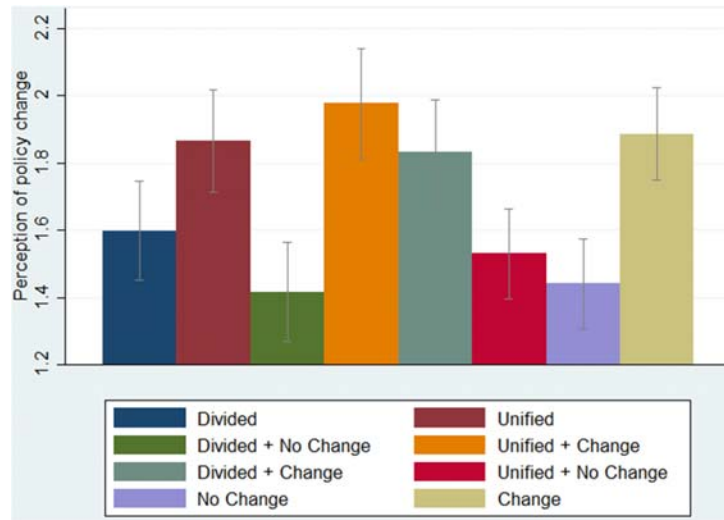
Figure 3.2 depicts public perceptions of policy change by institutional cues and elite cues. As expected, both institutional cues and elite cues influence public perceptions of policy change. Subjects are likely to perceive higher levels of policy change when the institutional cue of unified government is given, and lower levels of policy change when the institutional cue of divided government is presented. Similar patterns emerge for elite cues: the elite cue of policy change leads subjects to perceive higher levels of policy change while that of the status quo does the opposite. Figure 3.2b, which reports the results based on only partisans, largely mirrors the results for all the subjects, shown in Figure 3.2a. Although partisans' perceptions of policy change in the *Institutional Cue (Unified Government) × Elite Cue (Status Quo)* condition appear to be inconsistent, this does not allow us to reject the hypothesis that the institutional cue of unified government leads to higher levels of policy perceptions.

The OLS estimates reported in Table 3.2, and Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4 help further evaluate the statistical significance of the effect of each cue and examine the interactional effect of two cues. Overall, these results support my hypotheses about the effects of

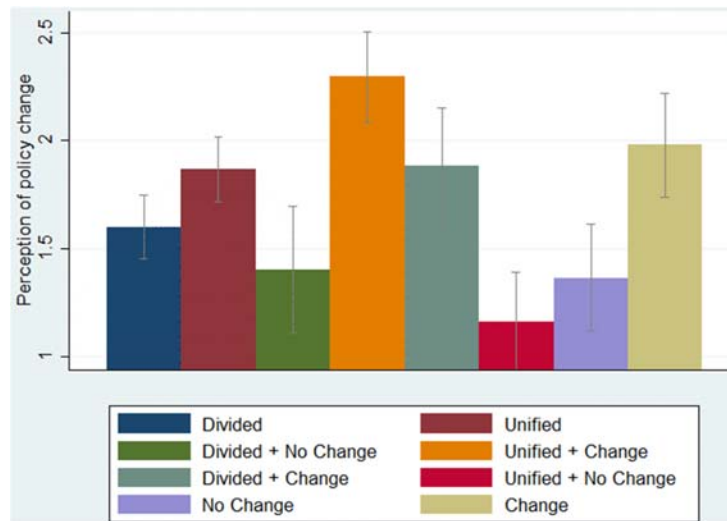
³⁵ Since my analysis focuses on experiments with random assignment, the question of the representativeness of the sample is, however, less critical when estimating treatment effects.

Figure 3.2 Perception of Policy Change by Institutional Cues and Elite Cues

(a) All Participants



(b) Partisans



institutional cues and elite cues separately, and suggest how the two distinct types of cues, together, affect policy perception.

There are several important findings that merit attention. First, elite cues have stronger influences on policy perception compared to institutional cues. As displayed in

Table 3.2 OLS Estimates of the Effects of Cues on Policy Perception

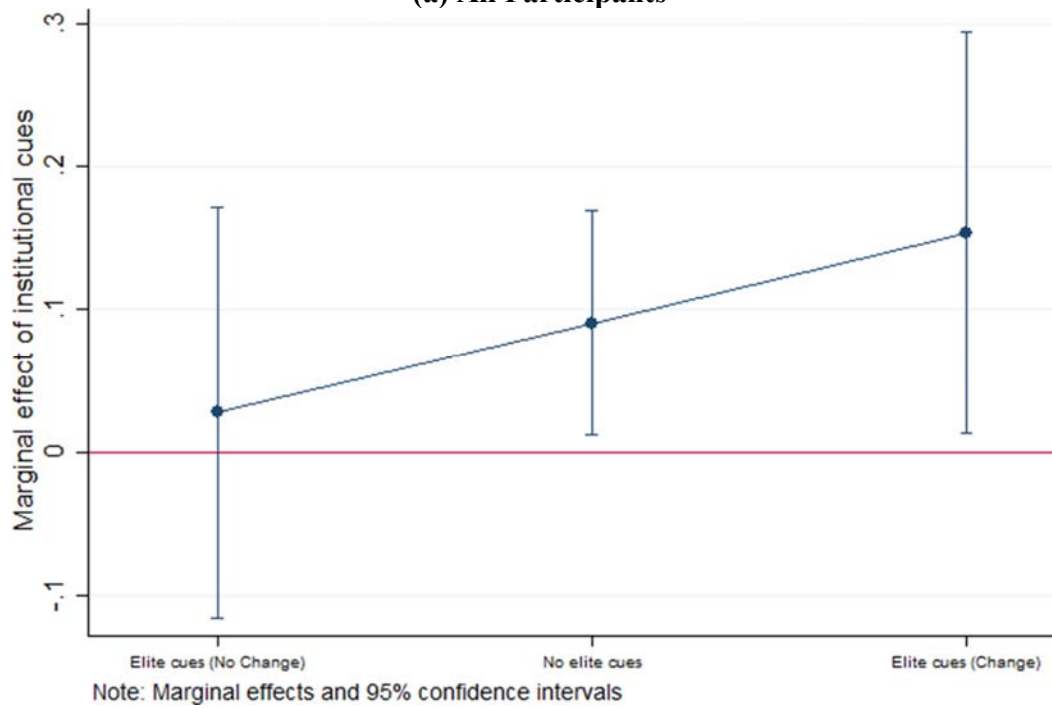
	All			Partisans		
	Coeff	SE		Coeff	SE	
Institutional Cues	0.091	0.048	**	0.101	0.049	***
Elite Cues	0.266	0.058	***	0.368	0.064	***
Institutional Cues × Elite Cues	0.063	0.072		0.154	0.077	***
Constant	1.683	0.043	***	1.706	0.045	***
Observations	552			494		
*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10 (one-tailed test)						
Dependent variables: <i>Perception of Policy Change</i> (ranging from 0 to 4)						
Independent variables: <i>Institutional Cues</i> (ranging from -1, divided government, 0, no institutional cues, to 1, unified government); <i>Elite Cues</i> (ranging from -1, status quo, 0, no elite cues, to 1, policy change)						

Figure 3.4, regardless of the sample, the presence of institutional cues, and their contents, the results provide consistent evidence to support my third hypothesis. Second, it is, however, important to note that subjects do not ignore institutional cues even when elites cues play a more effective role. As long as elite cues do provide conflicting information, the effects of institutional cues remain significant, albeit relative small, as shown in Figure 3.3. Moreover, the effects of elite cues significantly increase when institutional cues are consistent. This is particularly the case among partisans. While this finding does not approach statistical significance among the sample of all subjects ($p = 0.191$), the direction of association is consistent with the theoretical expectation.

Another interesting finding is that the influence of elite cues remains significant even if relatively objective institutional cues provide conflicting messages, as shown Figure 3.4. To be precise, for example, perception of policy gridlock based on the cue of divided government may not always guarantee the correct predictions. As the literature on

Figure 3.3 Marginal Effect of Institutional Cues on Policy Perception

(a) All Participants



(b) Partisans

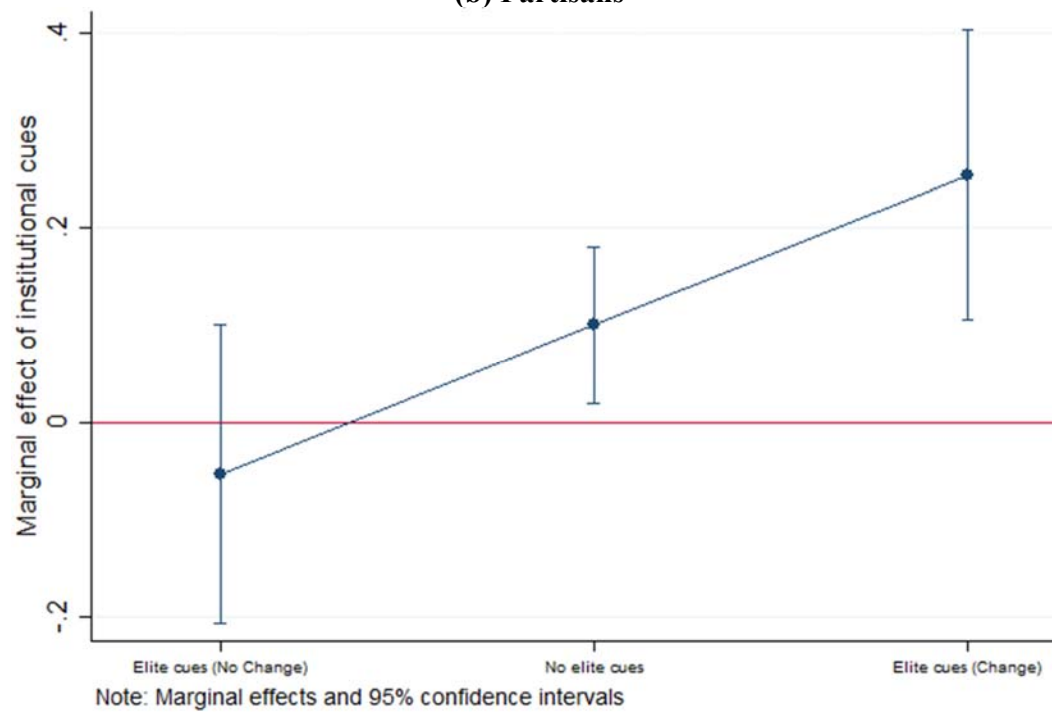
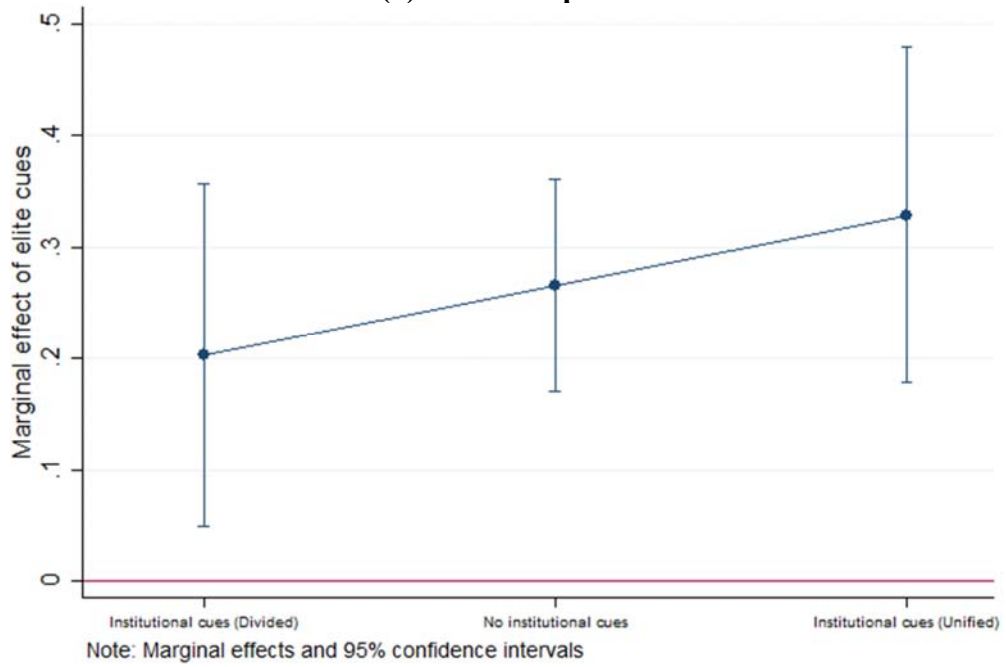
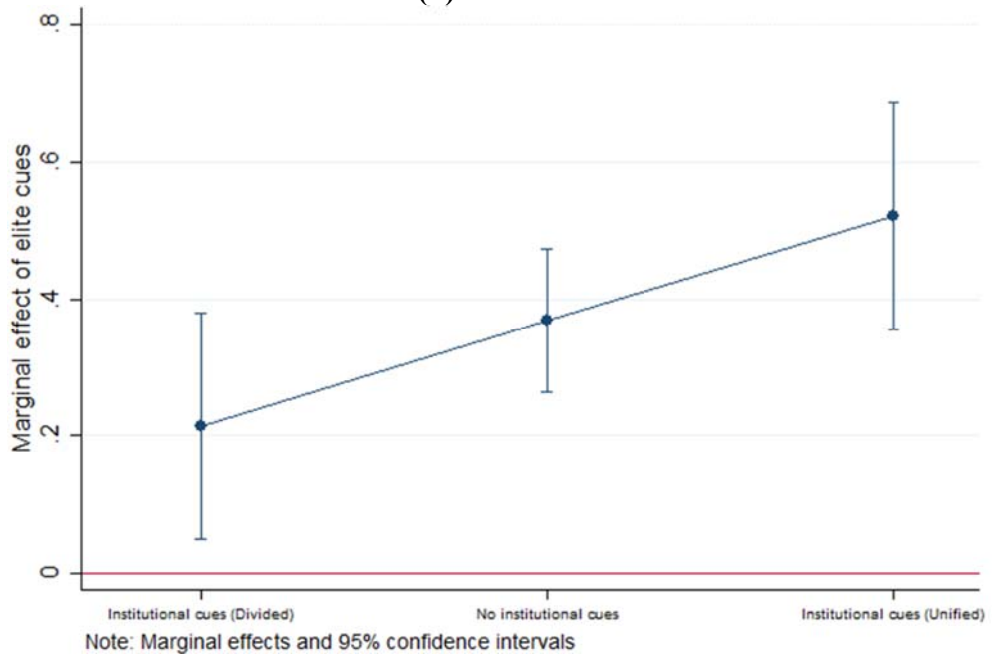


Figure 3.4 Marginal Effect of Elite Cues on Policy Perception

(a) All Participants



(b) Partisans



divided government shows, even under divided government, policy changes may be possible, if the ideological distance between the executive and the legislature is small, and the status quo is far away from all veto players (Tsebelis 2002), or if pivotal voters constitute a small gridlock interval (Krehbiel 1998). However, given that the cue of divided government usually reflects the possibility of policy gridlock well, the results suggest that inaccurate elite opinions can still misinform people, despite the presence of accurate institutional cues. In fact, Kuklinski et al. (2000) differentiate “being misinformed” from “being uninformed” (see also Kuklinski and Hurley 1994; Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Nadeau and Niemi 1995; Rahn 1993). According to them, using rules of thumb to draw inferences on the basis of limited information does not produce rational opinion if the information is wrong. After all, elite cues with pervasive effects that can overwhelm institutional cues can work as a double-edged sword.

Another interesting finding is that the influence of elite cues remains significant even if relatively objective institutional cues provide conflicting messages, as shown Figure 3.4. To be precise, for example, perception of policy gridlock based on the cue of divided government may not always guarantee the correct predictions. As the literature on divided government shows, even under divided government, policy changes may be possible, if the ideological distance between the executive and the legislature is small, and the status quo is far away from all veto players (Tsebelis 2002), or if pivotal voters constitute a small gridlock interval (Krehbiel 1998). However, given that the cue of divided government usually reflects the possibility of policy gridlock well, the results suggest that inaccurate elite opinions can still misinform people, despite the presence of accurate institutional cues. In fact, Kuklinski et al. (2000) differentiate “being misinformed” from

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3.5.2 Policy Perceptions and Partisan Beliefs

Under my experimental design, subjects are only encouraged to perceive (rather than assigned to) certain levels of policy change by randomly assigning cues. Some subjects refuse or fail to perceive the assigned levels of policy change (or gridlock), but the object of inference here is the effect of the perception of policy change and not the randomly assigned cues themselves (for the effects of cues, see the supplementary analysis results presented later). The instrumental variables (IV) method provides an estimate of this effect as opposed to that of the encouragement. The IV estimand is the average effect among those induced to perceive a certain level of policy change by a randomized encouragement known as the complier average causal effect or the local average treatment effect (LATE) (for a full account of the assumptions needed to identify estimates as causal in the instrumental variables approach, see Sovey and Green 2011, Angrist, Imbens, and Rubin 1996).

Table 3.3 presents the two-stage least squares regression results that report the effect of policy perception on partisan beliefs. Using a *Partisan Beliefs* index that incorporates both a subject’s in-group favoritism, and opposition to compromise, I find evidence to support my fifth hypothesis that citizens are more likely to form their partisan beliefs as they expect a larger extent of policy change. This finding also holds when I

Table 3.3 Two-Stage Least Squares Estimates of the Effect of Policy Perception on Partisan Beliefs

	Partisan Beliefs					
	Coeff	SE		Coeff	SE	
Policy Perception	0.283	0.114	***	0.291	0.134	***
Age				-0.001	0.002	
Education				-0.013	0.042	
Woman				0.151	0.074	**
Income				0.002	0.011	
Black				0.202	0.122	*
Constant	-0.500	0.199	***	-0.536	0.363	*
Observations	452			420		

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10 (one-tailed test, for hypothesized relationship; two-tailed test, for control variables about which we have no hypothesis)

Dependent variables: *Partisan Beliefs* which the mean of standard scores of *In-Group Favoritism* and *Opposition to Compromise* (ranging from -2.4 to 1.6)

Key independent variable: *Policy Perception* (ranging from 0, no change at all, to 4, complete policy change)

control for other demographic variables (As a comparison, refer to Appendix 2A.2 for the OLS estimates of two cues on partisan beliefs³⁶).

As shown in Table 3.4, the results from analysis of the disaggregated indicators also largely provide consistent evidence. In particular, the effect of policy perception on opposition to compromise is substantively large and statistically significant. Although the effect of policy perception on in-group favoritism does not reach the conventional statistical significance, the direction of association remains the same across alternative model specifications. This finding suggests that partisan beliefs have contextual underpinnings that have been largely ignored. Institutional cues and elite cues vary with

³⁶ Table shows the OLS estimates of effects of cues on subjects' partisan beliefs. Different from the previous results, these estimates demonstrate how institutional cues and elite cues are associated with measures of partisan beliefs. The statistical significance of the interaction term disappears while the effects of institutional cues and elites cues on a composite index of partisan beliefs remain statistically significant, albeit substantively small.

Table 3.4 Two-Stage Least Squares Estimates of the Effect of Policy Perception on Partisan Beliefs

	In-Group Favoritism		Opposition to Compromise		In-Group Favoritism		Opposition to Compromise	
	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE
Policy Perception	3.568	3.552	0.664	0.260 ***	1.941	4.158	0.808	0.304 ***
Age					0.120	0.072 **	-0.010	0.005 ***
Education					-1.413	1.304	0.061	0.090
Woman					1.462	2.301	0.378	0.160 **
Income					-0.023	0.342	0.009	0.024
Black					10.639	3.778 ***	0.035	0.269
Constant	66.938	6.168 ***	1.336	0.455 ***	67.330	11.261 ***	1.107	0.783 *
Observations	452		494		420		459	

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10 (one-tailed test, for hypothesized relationship; two-tailed test, for control variables about which we have no hypothesis)

Dependent variables: *In-Group Favoritism* (ranging from 0 to 100); *Opposition to Compromise* (ranging from 0 to 6)

Key independent variable: *Policy Perception* (ranging from 0, no change at all, to 4, complete policy change)

the given institutional context, and to the extent that people perceive greater policy change from these available cues, they are more likely to become partisan.

3.6 Conclusion

While an increasing literature documents theoretical and empirical grounds to suggest systematic relationships between political institutions and citizens' beliefs and actions, scholars rarely verify the underlying premise that citizens can understand and infer relevant implications from institutional context. In particular, can citizens perceive the expected policy change from the given institutional context, as political scientists do?

To answer these questions, I conducted a survey experiment over a large sample of U.S. adults that allows direct evaluation of the relative impact of two cues, their interactive effect on policy perception, and subsequent consequences for partisan beliefs.

My findings show that citizens shape their policy perceptions from the given institutional context by utilizing both easily observable institutional attributes and political elites' opinion as heuristic tools. While easily accessible and direct elite opinions play a significant role in shaping citizens' policy perceptions, I also find that institutional cues, relatively indirect cues that require moderate informational processing, show consistent effects. In particular, elite cues exercise influence largely unconditionally, regardless of the presence and the content of institutional cues. Institutional cues, however, are effective to the extent that elite cues do not present conflicting messages. Lastly, I find that public perceptions of policy change intensify partisan beliefs.

There are several important implications and considerations to take into account. First, my results find not only citizens' potential to make up their lack of information but also conditions under which to generate misinformation. Because heuristics are a substitute for actual knowledge, heuristic users are susceptible to a variety of biases that come with using a fast and efficient approach to decision making. Heuristics are useful when correct, but they can also prove detrimental when they are inaccurate (Dancey and Sheagley 2013; Kuklinski and Quirk 2000; Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Mondak 1994). My results show elite opinions endorsing significant policy changes influence subjects' policy perceptions despite the relatively objective institutional cue of divided government, exerting unconditional effects. On the other hand, the effects of institutional cues disappear when elite opinions point in the other direction. Considering the nature of the inferences citizens

make in this study, the possibility that trusted political elites present interpretations entirely opposite to the given institutional cues is less likely, in particular in American politics where multiple news media compete and citizens have a general ability to distinguish between partisan and non-partisan messages or credible and non-credible ones. However, my findings lead us to re-exam conditions under which accurate inferences are made. For example, inference about expected policy change, which is mostly non-partisan, contrasts the case where people already have their own partisan or directional goals regarding the object they evaluate and partisan elites disseminate diverging messages. Future research should specify conditions under which misinformation, or biased processing prevails accurate inference.

Second, the results should be understood with a careful attention to the specific institutional context. In the American context, citizens are likely to use simple institutional characteristics such as divided government for heuristic reasoning about expected policy change. But such cues may not be always available in the other countries. In this light, several recent findings that European citizens have and effectively utilize alternative institutional cues merit attention. According to this literature, European citizens use historical regularities in cabinet participation to anticipate how the government will form after elections (Armstrong and Duch 2010). Also another study (Fortunato and Stevenson 2013) finds that use coalition partnership as a heuristic to infer the direction of policy change in the absence of detailed information about parties' legislative records. Further research would benefit greatly from experimental designs that can verify causal relationships in the given institutional context.

Lastly, previous studies that focus on the policy implications of institutional context largely remain in the literature on voting behavior (Anderson 2000; Downs 1995; Fiorina 1992; Lacy and Paolino 1998; Kedar 2005; Powell and Whitten 1993; Rudolph 2003). However, my findings, that citizens' policy perceptions influence their partisan beliefs, suggest the value of expanding the scope of research into broader areas of mass behavior. Accordingly, this study may contribute to overcoming the "drunkard's search" of an increasing literature that connects political institutions and political behavior. That is, existing literature has heavily relied on the concept of "clarity of responsibility" (Anderson 1995; Duch and Stevenson 2008; Huber et al. 2005; Norpoth 2001; Powell and Whitten 1993; Rudolph 2003). Scholars have actively utilized this notion to study voting behavior, and in particular, economic voting, among other topics, and this institutional property that assigns credit and blame has been the major focus of the studies in the field of comparative political behavior. However, clarity of responsibility probably should not be the only property that political institutions have in influencing citizens' political behavior. Unfortunately, there have been few studies that further explore alternative dimensions of institutional configurations that matter to understand various citizens' beliefs and actions. My findings suggest that citizens' perception of expected policy change that they derive from the given institutional context matters, suggesting micro-level foundations to link macro-level institutional arrangements and partisan behavior, one of the most studied forms of political behavior.

Appendix 3A.1 Survey Items and Stimuli

[Introductory Text]

We would like to know your thoughts about an upcoming election. Please read the brief description that follows, and then, we will ask you several questions about what you read. The 2016 United States elections will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016. At that time, the President of the United States will be elected. In addition, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested.

Although both Republicans and Democrats agree that there must be significant changes in key issues, ranging from health care to immigration to gun control, they hold very different views and the opposite solutions to those issues. For example, Republicans would repeal the current health care reform, and push forward with an alternative plan known as the private coverage option. Democrats would expand the coverage for the uninsured further, and extends Medicaid as well. The below table shows a summary of where the Democratic Party and the Republican Party stand regarding several key policy areas.

[1. Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × No Elite Cue]

Suppose that we have a President from one political party and Congress controlled by another (For example, a President from the Republican Party while Congress controlled by the Democratic Party, or a President from the Democratic Party while Congress controlled by the Republican Party), as a result of the 2016 election.

[2. Institutional Cue (Unified Government) × No Elite Cue]

Suppose that we have a President who comes from the same political party that controls Congress (For example, a President from the Republican Party also controls Congress, or a President from the Democratic Party also controls Congress), as a result of the 2016 election.

[3. Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × Elite Cue (Policy Change)]

Suppose that we have a President from one political party and Congress controlled by another (For example, a President from the Republican Party while Congress controlled by the Democratic Party, or a President from the Democratic Party while Congress controlled by the Republican Party), as a result of the 2016 election.

Leading Republicans and Democrats have acknowledged that even if their party wins control, it would remain very difficult to make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be few, if any, significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, no matter who wins the White House and Congress.

[4. Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × Elite Cue (Status Quo)]

Suppose that we have a President who comes from the same political party that controls Congress (For example, a President from the Republican Party also controls Congress, or a President from the Democratic Party also controls Congress), as a result of the 2016 election.

Leading Republicans and Democrats have clear that if their party wins control, in the direction of their party's policy platform, they will make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, in the direction of political party in power.

[5. Institutional Cue (Divided Government) × Elite Cue (Policy Change)]

Suppose that we have a President from one political party and Congress controlled by another (For example, a President from the Republican Party while Congress controlled by the Democratic Party, or a President from the Democratic Party while Congress controlled by the Republican Party), as a result of the 2016 election.

Leading Republicans and Democrats have clear that if their party wins control, in the direction of their party's policy platform, they will make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, in the direction of political party in power.

[6. Institutional Cue (Unified Government) × Elite Cue (Status Quo)]

Suppose that we have a President who comes from the same political party that controls Congress (For example, a President from the Republican Party also controls Congress, or a President from the Democratic Party also controls Congress), as a result of the 2016 election.

Leading Republicans and Democrats have acknowledged that even if their party wins control, it would remain very difficult to make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be few, if any, significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health

care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, no matter who wins the White House and Congress.

[7. No Institutional Cue × Elite Cue (Policy Change)]

Leading Republicans and Democrats have acknowledged that even if their party wins control, it would remain very difficult to make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be few, if any, significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, no matter who wins the White House and Congress.

[8. No Institutional Cue × Elite Cue (Status Quo)]

Leading Republicans and Democrats have clear that if their party wins control, in the direction of their party's policy platform, they will make substantial changes on major issues that have been stalled in recent years. Experts predict that, as a result of the 2016 election, there will be significant changes in key policies, including the budget deficit, health care, immigration, same-sex marriage, gun control, and anti-terrorism, in the direction of political party in power.

[Perception of Policy Change]

Given this information, how much do you think the key policies can change, after the 2016 election?

- ☐ 1. Not at all
 - ☐ 2. A little
 - ☐ 3. A moderate amount
 - ☐ 4. A lot
 - ☐ 5. Completely
- (Recoded from 0 to 4)

[Feeling Towards Parties]

We'd like you to rate how you feel towards the two major political parties on a scale of 0 to 100. Zero means very unfavorable and 100 means very favorable. Fifty means you do not feel favorable or unfavorable. How would you rate your feeling toward the two political parties?

_____ Democratic Party
_____ Republican Party

[Opposition to Compromise]

Next, we have a question about the best approach for political leaders to follow in Washington. Where would you rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means it is more

important for political leaders to compromise in order to get things done, and 7 means it is more important for political leaders to stick to their beliefs even if little gets done?

- ☐ 1. More important to compromise
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.
- ☐ 6.
- ☐ 7. More important to stick to beliefs

(Recoded from 0 to 6)

Appendix 3A.2 OLS Estimates of the Effect of Cues on Partisan Beliefs

	Partisan Beliefs			In-Group Favoritism		Opposition to Compromise		
	Coeff	SE		Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	
Institutional Cues	0.041	1.450	*	1.250	1.130	0.086	0.720	
Elite Cues	0.051	1.800	**	1.544	0.070	0.112	2.750	***
Institutional Cues × Elite Cues	0.063	0.020		1.893	0.100	0.137	-0.080	
Age	0.002	-0.720		0.072	1.570	0.005	-2.49	*
Education	0.041	-1.070		1.229	-1.230	0.085	-0.22	
Woman	0.075	1.450		2.274	0.490	0.157	1.88	**
Income	0.011	-0.190		0.348	-0.190	0.025	0.06	
Black	0.127	1.830	**	3.860	2.870	0.270	0.44	**
Constant	0.180	0.750		5.461	13.110	0.368	7.91	***
Observations	420			420		459		

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10 (one-tailed test, for hypothesized relationship; two-tailed test, for control variables about which we have no hypothesis)
 Dependent variables: *Partisan Beliefs* which the mean of standard scores of *In-Group Favoritism* and *Opposition to Compromise* (ranging from -2.4 to 1.6); *In-Group Favoritism* (ranging from 0 to 100); *Opposition to Compromise* (ranging from 0 to 6)
 Key independent variable: *Policy Perception* (ranging from 0, no change at all, to 4, complete policy change)

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Chapter IV

The Partisan Secret:

Institutional Constraints on Policy Change and Party Unity

Abstract

This chapter argues that institutional context shapes the partisan bond among legislators. Viewing party unity as a broad concept that encompasses party members' decisions to vote together and their decisions to belong together, I theorize that institutional constraints on policy change significantly reduce political parties' abilities and incentives to foster party unity. Drawing upon novel measures from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset, I find evidence to support this relationship, based on 129 countries, with time series extending from 1980 to 2000. My account explains both temporal and spatial variation in legislators' partisan behavior across diverse countries in a consistent way regardless of their institutional difference, providing the broadest empirical examination yet conducted on this question.

4.1 Introduction

Political parties play a central role in modern democracies. Parties aggregate diverse social interests and structure an array of political choices for voters; they recruit candidates and compete for public offices; and finally, parties form the government and organize policy making (Key 1964). As a main vehicle that bridges voters and the government, “modern democracy is unthinkable” without political parties (Schattschneider 1942, 1).

According to contemporary scholarship, a political party forms as a solution to internal and external problems of collective action inherent in the legislative process (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005). Without durable coalitions, legislators face chaotic and unpredictable outcomes in policy making. Also, a political party enables party members to achieve (re)election by providing a brand name (or reputation) and resources for mobilizing citizens. Providing collective benefits, political parties are inevitable for legislators who face tough choices among votes, seats, and policies (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Fenno 1973; Saalfeld and Strøm 2014, 372; Strøm 1990).

As Schumpeter (1942, 283) put it, “[a] party is a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for political power.” Majority status confers substantial political benefits including internal advancement in the legislature and policy goals. Thus, to win majority status, legislators seek to solve the cooperation and coordination problems they face, and thus to enhance their legislative accomplishments and collective reputations by delegating to party leaders the authority to manage legislative resources and the legislative process.

Thus, the extent to which parties can discipline their members, ensuring a cohesive voting on the floor, has been a central concern in the literature on legislative behavior and

political parties, and a growing number of scholars seek to understand variation in party unity in a comparative perspective. This article contributes to this literature by placing political parties in a broad institutional environment. In particular, focusing on the institutional setting for policy making, I contend that institutional constraints on policy change significantly reduce political parties' abilities and incentives to foster party unity.

While many scholars have focused on institutional factors in explaining the patterns of party unity, the existing literature suffers from several shortcomings. First, while the existing literature examines the impacts of different institutional factors, the specific mechanism that links party unity and institutional environment often remains theoretically vague. For example, presidential systems are often argued to weaken legislative party unity whereas parliamentary systems are generally associated with higher levels of party unity (Baron 1998; Carey 2007; Diermeier and Feddersen 1998; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2005; Huber 1996); federalism is argued to weaken legislative party unity at the national level (Mainwaring 1999); where electoral systems foster competition among legislative candidates within the same party for personal votes (compared to closed lists electoral rules), parties should be less unified (Carey and Shugart 1995; Golden and Chang 2001; Hix 2004). However, how and why are these factors related to our contemporary understanding of how parties form and work? How do institutional factors systematically change key aspect(s) of the ways in which political parties foster unity?

Second, and as a result, most of the institutional accounts investigate the effects of individual institutional factors but do not offer a theoretical framework to understand the relationships among those factors in explaining party unity. For example, scholars compare the influences of different regime types, electoral systems, and party systems. However,

what are the relationships among those institutional factors? More importantly, how can we compare different cases across the multiple dimensions of institutional arrangements, and ultimately understand their roles in a consistent framework? Putting all individual institutions into a statistical model not only lacks a strong theoretical basis, but also fails to analytically explore how different configurations of political institutions matter.

The third issue is conceptual. While the concept of party unity itself refers to the observable degree to which party members belong and act together in general,³⁷ most of literature on party unity has focused heavily on party unity in legislative voting. Admittedly, in all democracies, legislatures are where major public policies are made, and legislators' voting behavior is of intrinsic interest to both scholars and general public. However, party unity also serves as an information shortcut to citizens to evaluate not only where the parties stand but also what they can do (Carey 2007, 93). Moreover, it is often argued to signal the level of party system institutionalization, and the consolidation of democracy. While voting unity is clearly a central element that characterizes the extent of party unity, it cannot be the whole story. This issue becomes more critical when one considers the controversies surrounding the commonly used measure: unity in roll-call votes (see, for example, Rice 1925; Bowler, Farrell, and Katz 1999; Carey 2007; 2009). As Keith Krehbiel (2000) points out, it is impossible from roll-call data to tell whether party unity in the legislature is due to party discipline or to ideological homogeneity. Moreover, these recorded votes are not a random selection of votes (Carrubba et al. 2006; Clinton and

³⁷ It is useful to clarify some terminological issues, as the terms 'unity', 'cohesion' and 'discipline' are often used interchangeably. Nonetheless, it is useful to keep them apart as referring to different analytical concepts, despite the difficulties of isolating the concepts in empirical research. Refer to the later discussion of different sources of party unity.

Lapinski 2008); rather, they are often called for by party leaders to signal the position of the group to outside groups, or to induce unity (Carrubba, Gabel, Hug 2008). These strategic incentives suggest that groups are likely to be more cohesive in roll-call votes than in non-roll-call votes (see Hug 2010). Given that most scholars care about party unity in the context of its independent role in politics, we need to do more than show voting unity for a complete picture. In discussing how parties stick together, Cox and McCubbins (2005, 10; 31-32) consider not only how parties discipline members to foster legislative cohesion but also what factors discourage members from quitting the party. To fully understand legislators' partisan bonds or 'loyalty', we may also need to consider both 'voice' and 'exit' (Hirschman 1970). Given that disunity, or dissent, occurs when party members voice and act against their party, party switching can be viewed as an extreme manifestation of partisan dissent (Kato 1998; O'Brien and Shomer 2013). While there are some studies that focus on legislators' party switching (see for example, Aldrich and Bianco 1992; Desposato 2006; Grose 2004; Heller and Mershon 2005; 2008, 2009; Laver and Benoit 2003; Mershon and Shvetsova 2008; O'Brien and Shomer 2013), a theoretical attempt to understand these related behaviors in a consistent framework is underdeveloped (see Kato 1998 for an exception).

Lastly, the lack of a broad cross-national dataset with sufficient temporal or spatial coverage has made it difficult for empirical analysis to reach a definitive conclusion regarding institutional effects. Due to this difficulty, most cross-national studies limit their focus to a small number of cases with either all presidential (Morgenstern 2004) or parliamentary systems (Depauw and Martin 2009; Kam 2009; Sieberer 2006), which restricts the ability to test for the effects of institutional factors on party unity. In particular,

as most of traditional institutional variables do not vary over time, scholars usually rely on spatial variation, with the remaining issue of how to control unobserved heterogeneity across countries. While Carey's (2007) cross-national study provides the most comprehensive empirical test of institutional accounts along these lines, his empirical evidence does not fully address this concern, as Cheibub (2007, 133-134) correctly notes.³⁸

In this article, I posit that it is the institutional structures for policy making – in particular, institutional constraints on policy change – that shape the unity of political parties. In particular, I demonstrate how the configurations of veto players determine the power of agenda control, a key element of party discipline, and the value of the party's majority status, and this in turn affects the unity of the party. I draw on Tsebelis' veto players model, which places different institutional configurations in a continuum, and contend that institutional configurations that allow for a large degree of policy change facilitate party unity. I also focus on how institutional context interacts with candidate selection method, a key disciplinary tool party leaders can use to affect the party unity.

Accordingly, I offer an alternative account of why countries with different characteristics in terms of traditional variables (regimes, party systems, electoral systems, types of legislatures, among others) often show similar patterns of party unity. This framework also enables us to systematically analyze both spatial and temporal variation in party unity. To test my hypotheses, I construct a novel measure of party unity from the

³⁸ Indeed, while his analysis includes 19 countries, almost all presidential countries (except the United States) are relatively new democracies where political parties are not fully institutionalized; but most of parliamentary regimes are countries with relatively longer democratic experience. Presidential regimes in the sample are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia, United States, and Uruguay, while parliamentary regimes include Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Israel, and New Zealand.

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2015). Based on coding by thousands of country experts and covering 129 democracies over several decades, V-Dem provides alternative indicators of party unity (both legislative cohesion and party switching), which I employ to conduct multiple tests to probe the relationship between institutional conditions and party unity.

This article proceeds as follows. I first review the existing literature on party unity, and connect the contemporary understanding of political parties to the analytical framework of political institutions. From this integrative understanding, I demonstrate how institutional structure for policy making affects both party leaders' ability and incentives to foster party unity, and derive main hypotheses on party unity that encompasses legislators' voting unity and party switching. Then, I present the data, my measures of the main variables, and the method used to test the hypotheses, followed by the quantitative analysis results. The article concludes by discussing the implications for partisan politics and future research.

4.2 Political Institutions, Policy Change, and Party Unity

Party unity results from three distinct sources (Carey 2007, 93; Heller and Mershon 2008, 911): cohesion, discipline, and agenda control. To begin with, party unity can be obtained by shared preference, which I refer to party cohesion. Elections produce legislative parties of like-minded legislators (e.g. Krehbiel 1993). However, members of a party disagree from time to time, and even when party cohesion fails, unity still can be brought about through party discipline. Party leaders control resources both within their parties and in the legislature (e.g. the authority to assign members key positions within the party, to appoint

members to important committee positions, and to nominate candidates for election), and use these resources as sanctions or rewards to induce members act together for a common purpose. Lastly, party leaders can uphold party unity by controlling the legislative agenda, the set of bills considered and voted on the floor. Cox and McCubbins distinguish between “positive” and “negative” agenda power. While the former refers to “the ability to push bills through the legislative process to a final-passage vote on the floor,” the latter captures “the ability to block bills from reaching a final passage vote on the floor” (Cox and McCubbins 2005: 20). In particular, Cox and McCubbins suggests that party leaders use their agenda-setting power to manage conflicts between collective and individual goals: controlling the agenda so that the sharpest conflicts are never even considered on the floor.

As Cox and McCubbins (2005, 32-33) point out, agenda control (in particular, negative agenda-setting power) is the most effective and least costly mechanism to bring about party unity. Screening candidates and disciplining legislators are costly and time-consuming actions. As in the case of the United States, party leaders’ nominating power, which is one of the central disciplinary tools, is not always available. On the other hand, controlling the agenda also indirectly results in party unity by contributing to other sources of party unity such as cohesion and party discipline. The better the majority party’s control of agenda-setting powers is, the more able it will be to secure favorable legislative accomplishments and the better its reputation or brand name will be. The better the party’s brand name, the better will be the prospects for (re)attainment of majority status (Cox and McCubbins 2005, 7). The majority status provides party leaders more resources (e.g. advancement to key positions in the legislature) to screen (to foster cohesiveness) and discipline party members.

In a nutshell, to the extent that party leaders are able to use agenda-setting powers effectively, parties can achieve unity. However, the power to control legislative agenda is closely tied with a broad institutional context and, in particular, institutional arrangements that structure policy-making process. No one makes this point clearer than George Tsebelis (2002). Agenda setters have to make proposals acceptable to the other veto players. Otherwise the proposals will be rejected and the status quo will be preserved. They will select among the feasible outcomes the one they prefer most. As a consequence, agenda setting powers are inversely associated with policy stability: the higher policy stability (the smaller the set of outcomes that can replace the status quo), the smaller the role of agenda setting. At the limit case where change from the status quo is impossible, it does not make any difference who controls the agenda. Recent studies have indirectly corroborated this theoretical expectation. For example, Bräuninger and König (1999) find that the agenda setting powers of the German government declines when legislation has to be approved by the upper chamber, the Bundesrat (See Sieberer 2006 for a similar argument). In an empirical study of East Central Europe, Zubek (2011) finds that countries with more centralized party systems have more opportunities for negative agenda control. In a similar vein, Zucchini (2011; 2011a) also links the party systems that prevent large policy change and limited agenda setting powers in some parliamentary systems.

Institutional constraints on policy change not only influence party leaders' ability to discipline party members – in particular, through agenda control – but also affect the incentives for legislators to cooperate for partisan goals and for party leaders to discipline party members. The more difficult it is to change the status quo policy, the more constrained parties are in reaching outcomes as close as possible to their ideal points.

Accordingly, when institutional conditions do not allow significant policy changes, the incentives for partisan cooperation are likely to diminish, as is the value of majority status for parties, discouraging party unity. Conversely, partisan cooperation is more likely to matter for individual legislators in the institutional conditions where significant policy changes are possible. Another potential path is provided through the legislators' electoral connection to voters. If institutional conditions do not permit significant policy changes, the party differentials between the parties (comparative benefits of supporting a political party over the other) are likely to decrease. As a result, a party's label loses its informational value, and the political party in power is less likely to matter for voters, as demonstrated in Chapter 2. Then, the extent as voters do not care which party wins the election, legislators' incentives for stronger party unity will be weaker. In contrast, with more partisan voters, legislators have stronger incentives to cooperate to secure and enhance the reputation of their party brands, and similarly they face greater transaction costs for switching their existing party membership.

This theoretical expectation regarding the connection between institutional conditions for policy making and political parties is not entirely new. In his analysis of nineteenth-century England, Cox (1987) attributes the development of partisan politics to the centralization of legislative authority in the Cabinet, which Walter Bagehot identified as the "efficient secret," largely after the passage of the first Reform Act in 1832. In a similar vein, by analyzing the case of Brazil, Figueiredo and Limongi (2000) claim that the unexpected level of legislative vote cohesion (despite a presidential system with intraparty

electoral competition) should be attributed to various provisions centralizing control over the legislative agenda.³⁹

It is José Antonio Cheibub (Cheibub 2007; Cheibub and Limongi 2002) who most systematically reviews and criticizes the existing institutional accounts. While the common arguments connect the regime type to levels of party unity, Cheibub contends that such claims are not only based on the untenable assumption about politicians – that they are purely office seekers – but are also inconsistent.⁴⁰ Reviewing the existing literature (Baron 1998; Carey 2007; Diermerier and Feddersen 1998; Huber 1996), he contends that what matters for party discipline (or party cohesion) is the way policy making is organized, and that the regime type itself is not sufficient to differentiate for this critical dimension. According to him, underlying formal models that link a parliamentary system with higher voting unity is the view of a presidential system such as that in the United States, where agenda-setting power lies with the legislature. However, if a majority party can control the legislative agenda (Cox and McCubbins 2005) in much the same way as prime minister

³⁹ See also Mayhew (1974) and Thorson (1998) for a similar idea in the literature on American politics

⁴⁰ That is, a standard argument is that presidents have no means to induce legislators to cooperate for presidential initiatives and legislators have a clear preference for protecting their constituents' interests to obtain their votes again in the future. On the other hand, the same would not occur under a parliamentary regime, as the prime ministers can offer their proposals as matters of confidence (Carey 2007, 94; see also Diermerier and Feddersen 1998; Huber 1996). However, Cheibub claims that the prime minister's calling (or threatening to call) an early election (that might result from a vote of no confidence) is not a credible threat that would induce party unity (Cheibub 2007, 123). Legislators who contribute to the collapse of the government while protecting their constituents' interests are not likely to be punished at the polls by those constituents. In order for such a threat to be credible, something beyond the vote of no confidence must also exist. While electoral laws may provide the incentives for legislators to cultivate personal vote (Carey and Shugart 1995; Hix 2004), the institutional setting for policy making, as Cheibub (2007, 122) notes, may deny them the means to do so (by centralizing decision making so that the preferences of the individual legislator are virtually irrelevant).

can, then the mechanism that drives party cohesion in parliamentary regimes can also operate under presidentialism (Cheibub 2007, 124). Although the two systems differ in the identity of the agenda setter – government in parliamentary systems, parliament in presidential ones; exactly the opposite from the expectations generated by the names, as Tsebelis (2002, 67) points out – we have no reason to expect a systematic variation in the centralization of policy making between a parliamentary system and a presidential system (Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh 2004).⁴¹

As discussed above, while several scholars emphasize the role of institutional arrangements that shape policy making, this insight has rarely been incorporated in a broad comparative analysis on party unity. An important challenge comes from the lack of theoretical framework that enables us to understand, compare, and analyze different sets of political institutions in a consistent way. Neither regime types, nor party systems alone capture the whole picture of institutional setting for policy making, and the understanding of how different combinations of traditional variables (such as regimes, party systems, electoral systems, and legislative structures, among others) structure the policy making is necessary for a systematic cross-national study. Moreover, while most traditional institutional variables vary only across countries, the wide cross-national variation in legislative rules and practices poses a serious obstacle to valid cross-national study of party unity (Cheibub 2007, 134; Kam 2009, 5).

⁴¹ Based on a broad cross-national study, Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh (2004) argue that presidents are on par with parliamentary executives in forming legislative coalitions to pass legislation. See also Laver and Shepsle (1999) for the argument that divided government, where the executive needs to seek support in the legislature beyond its own partisan base, per se does not distinguish parliamentary and presidential regimes.

I overcome these challenges by drawing on the analytical framework that focuses on institutional consequences for policy stability. While many scholars have studied the theoretical and empirical significance of political institutions in terms of their ability to change the policy of the status quo (Krehbiel 1998; Brady and Volden 1998; Binder 1999; Coleman 1999; Cox and McCubbins 2001; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003; see also Lijphart 1984; 1999), it is Tsebelis' veto players theory that develops a simple but rigorous framework to analyze the diverse institutional structures across countries and over time. Veto players are actors and institutions whose consent is required to alter policy. According to this framework, traditional variables, including regime types, the number of legislative chambers, the number or ideological positions of parties, or decision-making rules of all these actors, are translated into a certain configuration of veto players, which in turn will determine the policy stability in a political system. As the number of veto players, and the ideological distance among them, increases, the set of outcomes that can replace the status quo (or the winset of the status quo) decreases, and thus, significant departures from the status quo are impossible (Tsebelis 1995; 2002). Accordingly, the number of veto players may change over time in a country. For example, depending on whether the President and the two Houses of Congress are from the same party, or whether there exists significant ideological distance between the two major parties, the configuration of veto players in the United States can be very different. Such a theoretical implication is particularly significant for empirical analysis in the sense that this analytical framework enables us to analyze institutional effects using temporal variations within a country, overcoming the existing issue of how to control unobserved heterogeneity across countries.

In essence, institutional context significantly influences both party leaders' ability to discipline party members and party members' incentives to cooperate for their collective goals. In particular, institutional constraints on policy change will reduce the power of agenda control, which provides the most effective mechanism to bring about party unity. Moreover, when institutional context does not allow significant policy change, the party in power is less likely to matter (to both legislators and voters), and thus the incentives for party unity are likely to decrease.

Hypothesis 1: Party unity should decrease as the institutional constraints on policy change increase.

However, the existing literature documents somewhat conflicting evidence regarding whether party discipline and party unity, and in particular party sticking (vs. party switching), go hand in hand. For example, in their analysis of the Italian Chamber of Deputies from 1988 to 2000, Heller and Mershon (2008) offer a counterintuitive claim that strong party discipline creates an incentive for legislators, who have ambition of electoral success and career advancement, to switch their parties. I seek to resolve this puzzle by specifying conditions under which party leaders' discipline may backfire, leading to party disunity and to party members choosing the exit option.

In particular, I pay careful attention to the interactive relationship between disciplinary tools and the institutional context. Party leaders sometimes lack their powers over candidate selection (e.g. the United States or Iceland, where primaries are used), and the extent of their influence varies significantly across different political contexts. The

process by which candidates are selected constitutes a key element of parties' disciplinary tools to bring about party unity. Accordingly, many scholars have focused on the role of candidate selection process in explaining party unity (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Pennings and Hazan 2001; Le Duc 2001).⁴² If candidates are selected exclusively by a small group of party leadership (rather than a ballot of all party members, or by regional party organization), the party can ensure the cohesion of a legislative body "by weeding out potential troublemakers" (Bowler, Farrell, and Katz 1999, 6). In contrast, candidates selected by more decentralized procedures, such as primaries, are in a more independent position vis-à-vis the party and its leadership, incentivized to rely on their personal reputation and records, which in turn leads them to deviate more frequently from the demands of the party leadership (Hazan 1999; O'Brien and Shomer 2013; Pennings and Rahat 2001). I posit that institutional constraints on policy change interact with the candidate selection process to determine party unity. Party leaders' control of candidate selection is likely to foster party unity, as originally intended, but its impact would decrease where institutional arrangements limit the extent of policy change (and thus, the powers of agenda control). Conversely, to the extent that institutional context allows greater policy change (and thus greater agenda control power), party leaders' control of candidate selection is more likely to foster party unity.

Hypothesis 2: The positive impact of centralized candidate selection on party unity will decrease as institutional constraints on policy change increase.

⁴² Another advantage of focusing on the candidate selection process as a key variable that represents party discipline is that it is easily observable, and comparable within and across different contexts, compared to other disciplinary tools (e.g., advancement of key positions in the legislature).

This also implies the conditional effect of institutional constraints. That is, when party leaders exercise their power over candidate selection process, the institutional conditions that permit greater policy change (such as a small number of veto players) are more likely to produce higher levels of party unity. In contrast, such an institutional effect would decrease as the available tools party leaders can control to discipline party members, such as their nomination power, decrease. This suggests the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: The negative impact of institutional constraints on party unity will decrease as candidate selection methods are decentralized.

4.3 Data and Measures

For an empirical test of these hypotheses, I combine several datasets that include measures of key variables. I first define party unity, the dependent variable in this study, as a broad concept that is not limited to voting unity in the legislature. While most scholars focus on voting unity as an ultimate test for the ability of legislative parties to act in unison, controversies surrounding the common measure (such as the Rice Index of Cohesion) discussed above demand alternative ways to test theories and different measures to overcome the existing issues inherent in using roll-call data. Party disunity, or dissent, occurs when a party member acts against his or her party (Ozbudun 1970, 305). Thus, it encompasses a variety of activities, ranging from a legislator speaking out publicly against the party⁴³, to voting against the party line, and – at the limit – defection (Kam 2009, 39).

⁴³ See Becher and Sieberer (2008), for a study that employs legislators' public explanation of their voting decision as an indicator for party unity.

In discussing how parties stick together, Cox and McCubbins (2005, 10; 31-32) are very attentive, and consider not only how parties discipline party members to foster legislative cohesion but also what makes party members refrain from quitting the party. A more complete picture can emerge, when we understand partisan bonds, or loyalty in relation to voice and exit together.

To this end, I construct a novel measure of party unity by incorporating two indicators, voting unity and party switching, from the Varieties of Democracy dataset. This new dataset includes data on multiple indicators of different features of political parties in 173 countries around the world from 1900 until 2012, engaging over 2,500 country experts worldwide to collect the data (Coppedge et al. 2015). The country-expert data is combined into country-year estimates using a Bayesian ordinal item-response theory model. The first indicator is based on a question about the extent to which members of the legislature vote with other members of their party on important bills; the second indicator concerns the percentage of the members of the national legislature that changes or abandons their party in between elections. Indicators are aggregated through simple addition to form a *Party Unity* index, reflecting the expectation that each element of the index is partially substitutable.⁴⁴ Further detail on these measures is contained in Appendix 3A. It bears emphasis that the empirical results shown in subsequent tables are largely robust to the disaggregation of these indicators.

⁴⁴ An alternative aggregation rule, the multiplication of the two components requires the logic that every attribute is necessary for the concept and each of them affects the index only to the degree that the others are present. This view does not reflect the understanding of the relationship between voting unity and party switching.

The systematic relationships between institutional characteristics and party unity can be assessed only if there exists a meaningful competition among political parties. Thus, I exclude cases where executive and legislative positions are not filled by elections, using Vanhanen's (2000) measure of democratic competition.⁴⁵ Within this group, 129 countries, with time series from 1980 to 2000, are included in the main analysis given the availability of data.

To measure the main independent variable, the institutional constraints on policy change, I employ the Political Constraint Index (POLCON) developed by Henisz (2002). The measure is especially useful for purposes of testing my theory because it is designed to quantify the "feasibility of a change in policy given the structure of a nation's political institutions (the number of veto points) and the preferences of the actors that inhabit them (the partisan alignment of various veto points and the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the preferences within each branch)" (Henisz and Zelner 2010). Based on a spatial model of interaction between political actors, the measure takes into account three factors: 1) the number of independent branches of government with veto power over policy change, 2) the extent of party alignment across branches of government, and 3) the extent of preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch. The measure is continuous, with possible values ranging from 0 to 1. The largest values are given to country-years that feature the largest institutional constraints on policy change. Consistent with the theoretical insights supported by Tsebelis (1995, 2002), this measure pays particular attention to the institutional consequences for policy stability.

⁴⁵ Vanhanen's (2000) measure of democratic competition is constructed by $100 - \text{votes won by the largest party in presidential or parliamentary elections (or both, averaged) as \% of total votes cast}$. If executive and legislative positions are not filled by elections, competitiveness is scored as zero.

On the other hand, the level of centralization of the candidate selection method is measured by the V-Dem dataset. I reversed the original scale for convenient interpretation of the analysis results. In this reversed scale, the more centralized the candidate selection method, the higher the values given. The largest value is assigned to cases where national legislative candidates are selected exclusively by national party leaders; the smallest value to the cases where candidates are chosen by constituency groups or direct primaries.

To isolate the effect of institutional constraints on party unity, I include several control variables. First, I control for the effect of economic context on partisan behavior in the legislature, by including *GDP per capita*, a variable that can capture the levels of economic development. Party unity may be associated with the variables that are often argued to contribute to the institutionalization of political parties. For example, conflicts and controversies arising out of social divisions provide the demand for distinctive representation and the driving force behind the development of political parties (e.g., Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Also, political parties may not be considered as institutionalized if they cannot survive over time. Besides, the level of democracy may influence the partisan patterns in the legislature. To account for these possibilities, I control for the effect of the level of democracy⁴⁶, party age, and ethnic fractionalization. Summary statistics and the number of observations available for each variable are displayed in Table 4.1 (see Appendix 4A for details of these measures).

⁴⁶ Among several alternative options, Polity IV incorporate a component to capture the extent of checks and balances which captures an important dimension which the POLCON is based on; Freedom House employs a maximalist definition of democracy as it includes both political and civil rights along with other aspects of democracy. Compared to other measures, Vanhanen (2000) is composed of two elements: a measure of competition (the percent of seats in the legislature won by all but the plurality winner) and a measure of participation (the number of voters divided by the entire population), which are, according to him, “objective” indicators.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Variables

Variable		Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Obs.	
Voting Unity	overall	0.241	0.861	-2.915	1.559	N =	2216
	between		0.777	-2.789	1.463	n =	149
	within		0.250	-1.460	1.487	T =	14.87
Party Switching	overall	0.195	1.050	-0.964	4.942	N =	2216
	between		1.054	-0.964	4.942	n =	149
	within		0.351	-2.991	2.346	T =	14.87
POLCON	overall	0.306	0.206	0.000	0.720	N =	2173
	between		0.179	0.000	0.700	n =	148
	within		0.117	-0.220	0.793	T =	14.68
Candidate Selection	overall	-0.506	0.976	-3.337	1.705	N =	2216
	between		0.900	-3.337	1.608	n =	149
	within		0.274	-1.773	0.894	T =	14.87
GDP per capita	overall	6472.638	6133.059	436.110	28701.930	N =	1980
	between		5505.235	449.152	22895.800	n =	136
	within		1191.235	1660.750	15112.470	T =	14.56
Democracy	overall	17.391	12.594	0.000	47.080	N =	2217
	between		11.501	0.060	42.692	n =	149
	within		4.567	-11.968	35.094	T =	14.88
Party Age	overall	33.218	28.780	3.750	153.546	N =	2150
	between		26.240	3.750	146.645	n =	143
	within		2.084	11.962	47.529	T =	15.04
Ethnic Fractionalization	overall	0.417	0.258	0.000	0.930	N =	2114
	between		0.261	0.000	0.930	n =	144
	within		0.000	0.417	0.417	T =	14.68

Formally, the basic time-series cross-sectional specification is as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1 POLCON_{it} + \beta_2 Candidate\ Selection_{it} + \beta_3 POLCON_{it} \\ \times Candidate\ Selection_{it} \\ + X'_{it}\beta_4 + \alpha_i + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{it}$$

Where Y_{it} is the Party Unity Index in country i and year t , α_i and γ_t are country-specific and year-specific intercepts, X'_{it} is a vector of time-varying control variables, the remaining variables are the partisan-institutional indicators of interest introduced above, and ϵ_{it} is an idiosyncratic error. The country fixed effects capture time-invariant country-specific confounders. The year fixed effects capture factors that are common across all countries in a particular year, such as global socioeconomic factors and control for any general time trend in my data. I vary this basic model with alternative sets of control variables and different model specifications.

4.4 Analysis Results

I begin with the basic specification, presented in Model 1, Table 4.2. Here, party unity is regressed on POLCON in an ordinary least squares model along with year and country fixed effects, using cluster-robust errors to correct for panel-specific autocorrelation. This model covers 1,860 country-year observations from 129 countries from 1980 to 2000. Model 2 replaces the use of country fixed effect in a random effects model given the time-invariant variable, ethnic fractionalization, and other variables that change little over time.

Table 4.2 Estimates for Party Unity

<i>Party Unity</i>						
	<i>Model 1</i>			<i>Model 2</i>		
	Coefficient		Standard Error	Coefficient		Standard Error
POLCON	-0.303	**	0.125	-0.301	*	0.124
Candidate Selection	0.290	***	0.078	0.269	***	0.073
GDP per capita	0.000	*	0.000	0.000	*	0.000
Democracy	-0.006		0.004	-0.004		0.004
Party Age	0.012		0.008	0.011		0.003
Ethnic Fractionalization				-0.519	*	0.300
	Year FE			Year FE		
	Country FE			Country RE		
Countries	129			129		
Years (Max)	21			21		
Obs	1860			1860		
R2 (within)	0.244			0.271		

Outcome: party unity. Unit of analysis: country-year. FE: fixed effects. RE: random effects.

Estimator: OLS (ordinary least squares), standard errors clustered by country.

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10.

The estimated coefficients and standard errors for *POLCON* in Models 1 and 2 indicate its significant relationship with party unity. The results suggest that institutional constraints on policy change discourage party unity, consistent with my theoretical expectation. I also find that centralized candidate selection methods are likely to foster party unity. Among the control variables, only *Ethnic Fractionalization* has a consistent negative effect on party unity. Model 1, Table 4.3 offers a refinement of Model 1, Table 4.2 by considering that the effect of candidate selection method is conditioned by its institutional context. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the positive impact of centralized

Table 4.3 Estimates for Party Unity

<i>Party Unity</i>						
	<i>Model 1</i>			<i>Model 2</i>		
	Coefficient		Standard Error	Coefficient		Standard Error
POLCON	-0.396 ***		0.155	-0.388 ***		0.153
Candidate Selection	0.407 ***		0.079	0.382 ***		0.077
POLCON*Candidate Selection	-0.492 **		0.162	-0.467 ***		0.161
GDP per capita	0.000		0.000	0.000 **		0.000
Democracy	-0.005		0.004	-0.004		0.003
Party Age	0.012		0.008	0.010 ***		0.003
Ethnic Fractionalization				-0.567		0.300
	Year FE			Year FE		
	Country FE			Country RE		
Countries	129			129		
Years (Max)	21			21		
Obs	1860			1860		
R2 (within)	0.272			0.271		

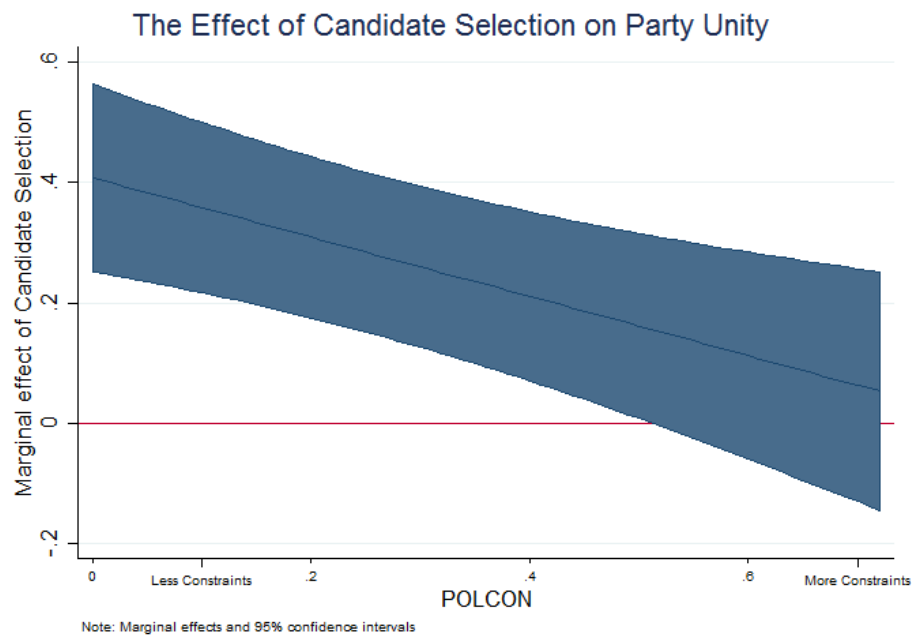
Outcome: party unity. Unit of analysis: country-year. FE: fixed effects. RE: random effects.

Estimator: OLS (ordinary least squares), standard errors clustered by country.

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10.

candidate selection decreases as institutional constraints on policy change increase. Given that candidate selection process is a key disciplinary device that party leaders can use to control their members, this result shows how institutional constraints condition the way such control is exercised to foster party unity. For the convenience of the interpretation, I plot the estimated marginal effect of the centralized candidate selection and the 95% confidence intervals over the range of *POLCON* in Figure 4.1.

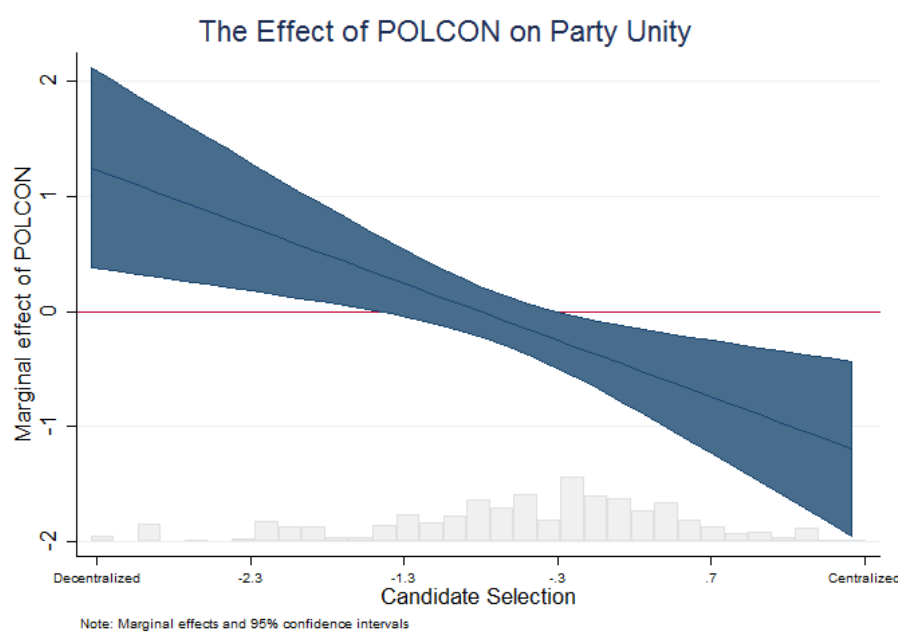
Figure 4.1



Overall, centralized candidate selection works as expected, fostering party unity. When institutional arrangements do not allow any significant change, however, such a disciplinary device is less likely to work. Institutional gridlock deprives party leaders of their capacity to exercise their power to control the legislative agenda, which serves the critical role in maintaining party unity. Also, as it becomes more difficult for parties to achieve outcomes as close as possible to their ideal points, legislators have fewer incentives to cooperate for partisan goals. Facing this situation, the centralized candidate selection process can backfire – party members may voice their dissent or even choose to exit over loyalty. But this possibility remains statistically insignificant.

Regarding the interaction between institutional constraints and candidate selection, Figure 4.2 shows how marginal impact of POLCON varies across the range of candidate selection methods. As expected, the institutional constraints on policy change have a

Figure 4.2



greater negative effect as party leaders exercise a more centralized influence in selecting candidates. One unexpected finding is that the institutional effect becomes positive when the candidate selection process is decentralized to a larger extent. I also provide a frequency distribution for the variable Candidate Selection plotted on the horizontal axis to access the relative density of observations across its range. Of the sample observations, about 10%, including the United States (-3.34) and Iceland (-3.03), lie in this range. While they are not a trivial set of outlier observations, such observations are only 5% and 0.8% respectively when electoral systems and regime types are controlled for, and when additionally characteristics of party systems are controlled for; and such observations do not exist in the dynamic model where the *Party Unity* index in the previous year is included as an additional regressor (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.4 Estimates for Voting Unity

<i>Voting Unity</i>				
	<i>Model 1</i>		<i>Model 2</i>	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
POLCON	-0.308 *	0.164	-0.306 *	0.163
Candidate Selection	0.473 ***	0.100	0.446 ***	0.096
POLCON*Candidate Selection	-0.391 **	0.166	-0.377 **	0.167
GDP per capita	0.000	0.000	0.000 *	0.000
Democracy	-0.003	0.004	-0.003	0.004
Party Age	0.002	0.008	0.004	0.003
Ethnic Fractionalization			-0.506 *	0.281
	Year FE		Year FE	
	Country FE		Country RE	
Countries	129		129	
Years (Max)	21		21	
Obs	1860		1860	
R2 (within)	0.249		0.247	

Outcome: legislative voting unity. Unit of analysis: country-year. FE: fixed effects. RE: random effects.

Estimator: OLS (ordinary least squares), standard errors clustered by country.

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10.

To further check the robustness of the findings, I evaluate how sensitive the estimates are with respect to alternative model specifications. I first reanalyze the data by disaggregating the *Party Unity* index into the two individual components: voting unity and party switching. Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 show the additional analysis results that are largely consistent with the previous findings.

Table 4.5 Estimates for Party Switching

<i>Party Switching</i>						
	<i>Model 1</i>			<i>Model 2</i>		
	Coefficient		Standard Error	Coefficient		Standard Error
POLCON	0.484 **		0.216	0.467 **		0.213
Candidate Selection	-0.342 ***		0.103	-0.318 ***		0.097
POLCON*Candidate Selection	0.593 **		0.211	0.208 **		0.208
GDP per capita	0.000		0.000	0.000 **		0.000
Democracy	0.008		0.006	0.006		0.006
Party Age	-0.022 **		0.010	-0.016 ***		0.003
Ethnic Fractionalization				0.637		0.447
	Year FE			Year FE		
	Country FE			Country RE		
Countries	129			129		
Years (Max)	21			21		
Obs	1860			1860		
R2 (within)	0.193			0.191		

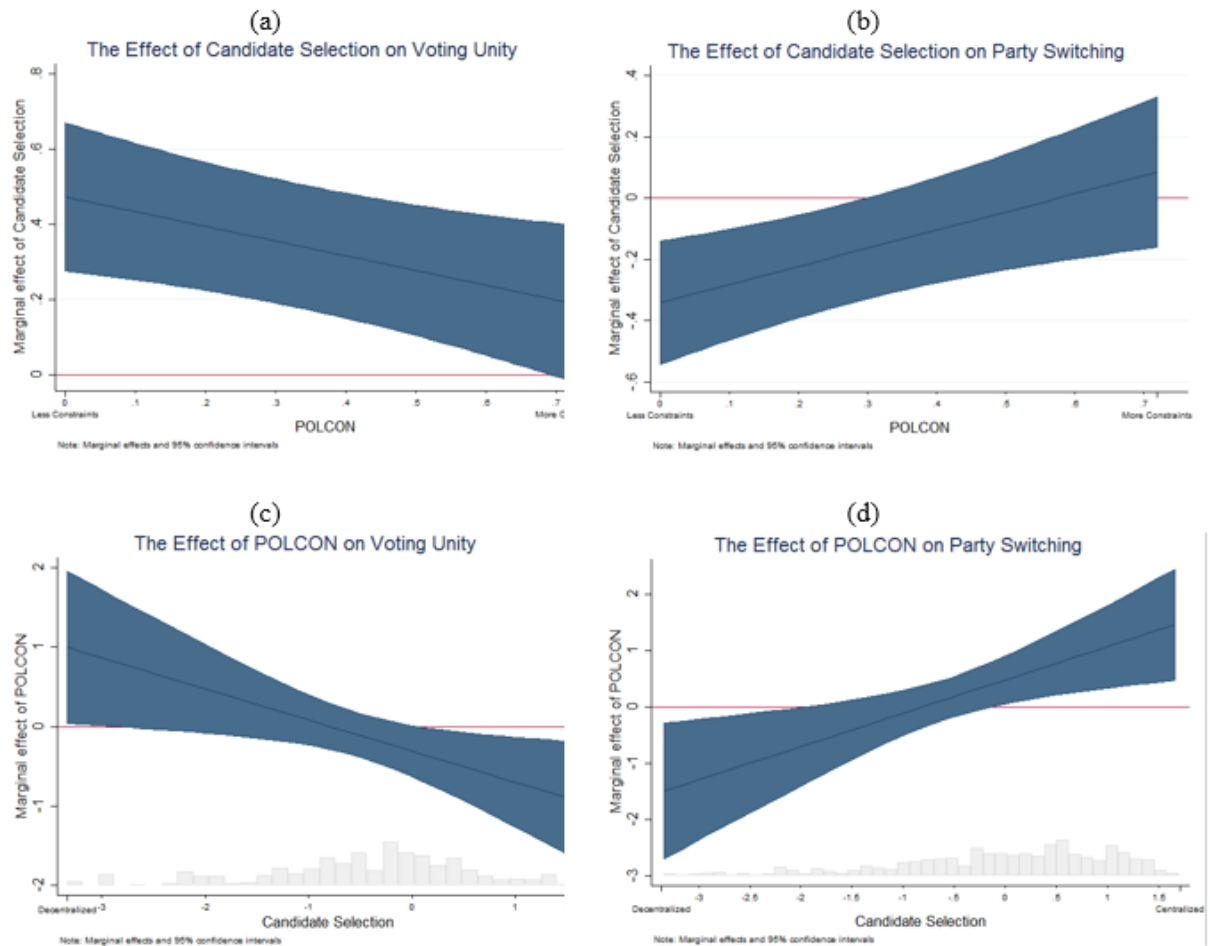
Outcome: party switching. Unit of analysis: country-year. FE: fixed effects. RE: random effects.

Estimator: OLS (ordinary least squares), standard errors clustered by country.

*** p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10.

Figure 4.3a and 4.3b first show that centralized candidate selection largely encourages party members to vote with other members of their parties, and discourages members' party switching. Such effect decreases as institutional arrangements make significant policy change less likely. On the other hand, as shown in Figure 4.3c, the marginal effect of *POLCON* on *Voting Unity* is negative and significant to the extent that

Figure 4.3 Marginal Effects of Candidate Selection and POLCON



the candidate selection is centralized, but it does not reach a statistical significance when candidate selection is largely decentralized. Party switching shows similar patterns as a mirror image, as shown in Figure 4.3d.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Additionally, Figure 4.3b suggests that inconsistent finding of party unity previously discussed is largely driven by the negative institutional effect under the decentralized candidate selection estimated in Table 3.5. But again, this inconsistency disappears when I control for other key control variables including electoral systems, regime types, and party system characteristics.

Table 4.6 Estimates for Party Unity

Party Unity									
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	Coef		SE	Coef		SE	Coef		SE
POLCON	-0.435	**	0.189	-0.369	**	0.153	-0.151	*	0.090
Candidate Selection	0.364	**	0.106	0.322	**	0.077	0.140	*	0.055
POLCON*Candidate Selection	-0.543	**	0.213	-0.451	**	0.161	-0.237	*	0.112
GDP per capita	0.000		0.000	0.000	**	0.000	0.000		0.000
Democracy	-0.004	*	0.002	-0.004		0.003	0.000		0.002
Party Age	0.010		0.010	0.006	**	0.003	0.001		0.003
Closed-List PR	-0.681	**	0.217	-0.829	**	0.285	-0.334	*	0.103
Parliamentary	0.008		0.038	0.030		0.031	0.047	*	0.028
Party Linkages				-0.193	**	0.062	-0.110	*	0.040
Party Organizations				0.251		0.171	0.110	*	0.064
Party Branches				0.065		0.143	0.040		0.069
	Year FE			Year FE			Year FE		
	Country FE			Country FE			Country FE		
							Dynamic Model		
Countries	82			82			82		
Years (Max)	21			21			21		
Obs	1102			1102			1102		
R2 (within)	0.349			0.400			0.73		

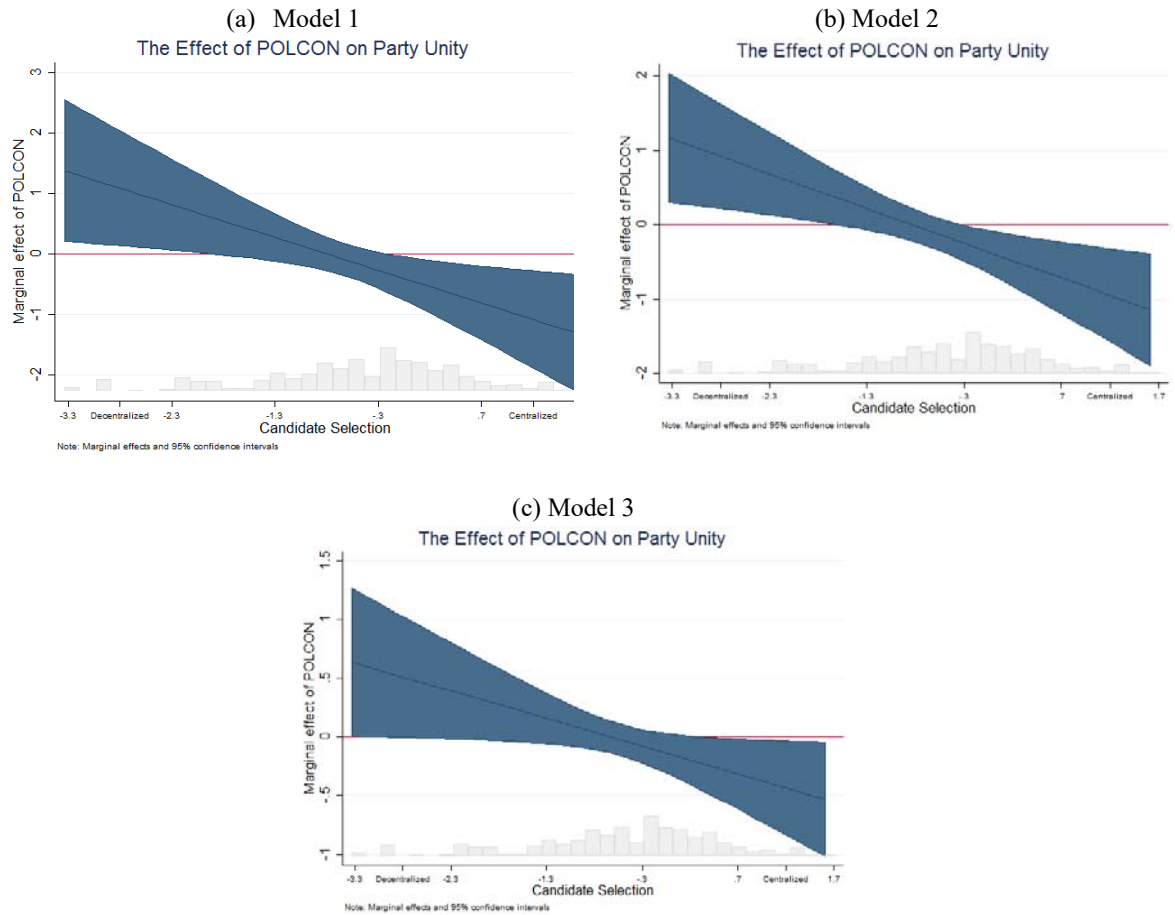
Table 4.6 shows a series of different models that extend the basic models with additional variables that could possibly affect the original estimates. The additional control variables include the closed-list proportional electoral system (dummy variable), regime types

(dummy variable), and several important characteristics of the party systems, including party linkages (continuous, from “clientelistic” to “policy/programmatic”), party organizations (continuous, from “no parties with permanent organizations” to “more than half of the parties with permanent organizations”), and party branches (continuous, from “no parties with permanent local branches” to “more than half of the parties with permanent local branches”). All variables are defined in Appendix 4A. In Model 1, the results show that my findings hold even after controlling for existing explanations that emphasize the role of closed-list proportional representation (PR) systems (Hix 2004) or parliamentary systems (Carey 2007; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006; Samuels and Shugart 2010). Indeed, the results do not support the existing claims, in terms of the direction of the association and their statistical significance. In particular, parliamentary systems have relatively higher party unity than other types, including presidential systems and semi-presidential systems, but their substantive effect is minimal and statistically insignificant.⁴⁸ The closed-list PR systems and policy-oriented party linkages do not make parties more united, and the direction of association was opposite to the common claims.⁴⁹ In Model 3, I estimate a dynamic model by include $Y_{i,t-1}$, *Party Unity Index* in the previous year. My main findings still hold despite the different model specifications (also refer to Figure 4.4).

⁴⁸ In fact, there are several quantitative studies that also do not find the significant impact of the regime type (e.g., Hix 2004; Coman 2015).

⁴⁹ According to additional analysis, policy-oriented party linkages discourage voting unity while they encourages party switching. The closed lists are likely to encourage party switching. On the other hand, its impact on voting unity is positive but it is not statistically significant.

Figure 4.4 Marginal Effects of POLCON



4.5 Conclusion

This article examined how institutional setting for policy making shape party unity. First, it explains party unity as the result of legislators' actions and response to incentives and constraints determined by their institutional surroundings. Second, I view party unity as a broad concept that encompasses party members' decisions to vote together and their decisions to belong together. Connecting the literature on political parties to the analytical framework of comparative political institutions, I demonstrate how institutional conditions

for policy making affect political parties' abilities and incentives to foster unity. In particular, I argue that the institutional arrangements allowing for a greater extent of policy change should increase party unity and magnify the impact of candidate selection – one of party leaders' key disciplinary tools – on party unity.

Using the largest time-series cross-section dataset on party unity to date, I confirm my hypotheses. I utilize new measures of party unity that can complement the previous measure based on roll-call data, and I incorporate two separate lines of research within a consistent framework. I find that institutional constraints on policy change are a significant and substantively important factor to account for legislators' partisan behavior. As institutional arrangements do not allow significant policy changes, party members are more likely to voice their dissent and exit as well. Also, I find that the positive impact of centralized candidate selection on party unity is conditioned by the institutional arrangements that structure policy making. This resolves some of the conflicting claims regarding the determinants of party unity. On one hand, my findings confirm previous arguments that emphasize the way policy making is organized by institutional context. Nevertheless, those claims have either been derived theoretically or advanced on the basis of evidence from a small number of cases (Cox 1987; Cheibub 2007; 2009; Figueiredo and Lomongi 2000), but they have rarely been tested with large-scale quantitative data. The new dataset affords a greater leverage in estimating and disentangling the effects of different institutional factors, and my analysis accounts for country heterogeneity using fixed effects, ruling out the possibility that time-invariant unobserved characteristics drive the effects. The results are robust across different model specifications.

Several caveats to my study should be noted for future research. First, the key dependent variables including voting unity and party switching are measured at the aggregate level. However, we can easily imagine that different characteristics of parties, or legislators, could play a significant role in shaping their actions in response to the given institutional context. To scrutinize the micro-foundations of the institutional effect, further investigations of multilevel data would be necessary. Second, in this article, I propose several potential mechanisms that underlie the relationship between institutional constraints on policy change and party unity. While the focus of this study is not on the identification of the central process that drives the institutional effect, future research should explore the specific mechanisms. Finally, this study is aligned with the established notion that party unity encompasses a variety of party members' actions and responses as an organizational characteristic. In this light, both voicing dissent and exiting are understood as behavioral attributes that constitute party disunity. Future work could explore the conditions under which legislators choose voice instead of exit, or vice versa.

Appendix 4A.1 Variable Definitions and Sources

Voting Unity: Is it normal for members of the legislature to vote with other members of their party on important bills? Responses: (0) Not really. Many members are elected as independents and party discipline is very weak. (1) More often than not. Members are more likely to vote with their parties than against them, but defections are common. (2) Mostly. Members vote with their parties most of the time. (3) Yes, absolutely. Members vote with their parties almost all the time. *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

Party Switching: Roughly what percentage (%) of the members of the national legislature changes or abandons their party in between elections? Does not include official party splits (when one party divides into two or more parties) or dissolutions (when a party formally dissolves). *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

POLCON (Political Constraints Index) III: This index measures the feasibility of policy change, i.e. the extent to which a change in the preferences of any one political actor may lead to a change in government policy. The index is constructed from 1) the number of independent branches of government with veto power over policy change, 2) the extent of party alignment across branches of government, and 3) the extent of preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch. *Source:* Henisz (2000).

Candidate Selection - National/Local: How centralized is legislative candidate selection within the parties? The power to select candidates for national legislative elections is often divided between local/municipal party actors, regional/state-level party organizations, and national party leaders. One level usually dominates the selection process, while sometimes candidate selection is the outcome of bargaining between the different levels of party organization. Responses: (0) National legislative candidates are selected exclusively by national party leaders. (1) National legislative candidate selection is dominated by national party leaders but with some limited influence from local or state level organizations. (2) National legislative candidates are chosen through bargaining across different levels of party organization. (3) National legislative candidates are chosen by regional or state-level organizations, perhaps with some input from local party organizations or constituency groups. (4) National legislative candidates are chosen by a small cadre of local or municipal level actors. (5) National legislative candidates are chosen by constituency groups or direct primaries. Scale reversed. *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

Democracy index (Vanhanen): Derived by multiplying Vanhanen's Competition Index (100 - votes won by the largest party in presidential or parliamentary elections (or both, averaged) as % of total votes cast) and Participation Index, an aggregate measure of the turnout in elections (percentage of the total population who voted in the same election) and the number of referendums, and then dividing this product by 100. *Sources:* Vanhanen (2000).

Party Age: Average age of three largest parties in the lower (or unicameral) chamber of the national legislature. *Source:* Database of Political Institutions 2012 (updated Jan. 2013) (Beck et al. 2001)

Ethnic Fractionalization: The probability that two randomly chosen individuals within a society are members of different ethnic groups, calculated with the Herfindahl index. *Source:* Alesina et al (2003)

GDP Per Capita: Gross domestic product per capita. *Source:* Maddison Project (Bolt & van Zanden 2014)

Closed List: A dummy variable of whether closed lists are used. When PR is "1", closed list gets a "1" if voters cannot express preferences for candidates within a party list, 0 if voters can. If PR is "NA" or 0, and Mean District Magnitude = 1, Closed list is NA. If PR is "NA" or 0 and Mean District Magnitude is greater than one, the following rules apply: 1) If only one party takes seats, closed list is: "0" (open list), if the number of candidates is greater than the number of seats in an electoral district in a one-party state where other parties may or may not be illegal (LIEC is 4 or 5), "1" (closed list), if the number of candidates equals the number of seats in an electoral district in a one party state where other parties are illegal (LIEC is 3), blank, if it is unclear whether there is more than one candidate for every seat in an electoral district in a one-party state where other parties are illegal (LIEC is 3.5). 2) If there are multiple parties taking seats, closed list is blank unless the system is explicitly stated as open or closed. *Source:* Database of Political Institutions 2012 (updated Jan. 2013) (Beck et al. 2001)

Parliamentary: A dummy variable of parliamentary system or not. Reconstructed from Database of Political Institutions 2012 (updated Jan. 2013) (Beck et al. 2001). If parliamentary system, 1 and otherwise (including both presidential system, and semi-presidential system), 0. *Source:* Database of Political Institutions 2012 (updated Jan. 2013) (Beck et al. 2001)

Party Linkages: Among the major parties, what is the main or most common form of linkage to their constituents? A party-constituent linkage refers to the sort of "good" that

the party offers in exchange for political support and participation in party activities. Responses: (0) Clientelistic. Constituents are rewarded with goods, cash, and/or jobs. (1) Mixed clientelistic and local collective. (2) Local collective. Constituents are rewarded with local collective goods, e.g., wells, toilets, markets, roads, bridges, and local development. (3) Mixed local collective and policy/programmatic. (4) Policy/programmatic. Constituents respond to a party's positions on national policies, general party programs, and visions for society. *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

Party Organizations: How many political parties for national-level office have permanent organizations? A permanent organization connotes a substantial number of personnel who are responsible for carrying out party activities outside of the election season. Responses: (0) No parties. (1) Fewer than half of the parties. (2) About half of the parties. (3) More than half of the parties. (4) All parties. *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

Party Branches: How many parties have permanent local party branches? Responses: (0) None. (1) Fewer than half. (2) About half. (3) More than half. (4) All. *Source:* V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2015).

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